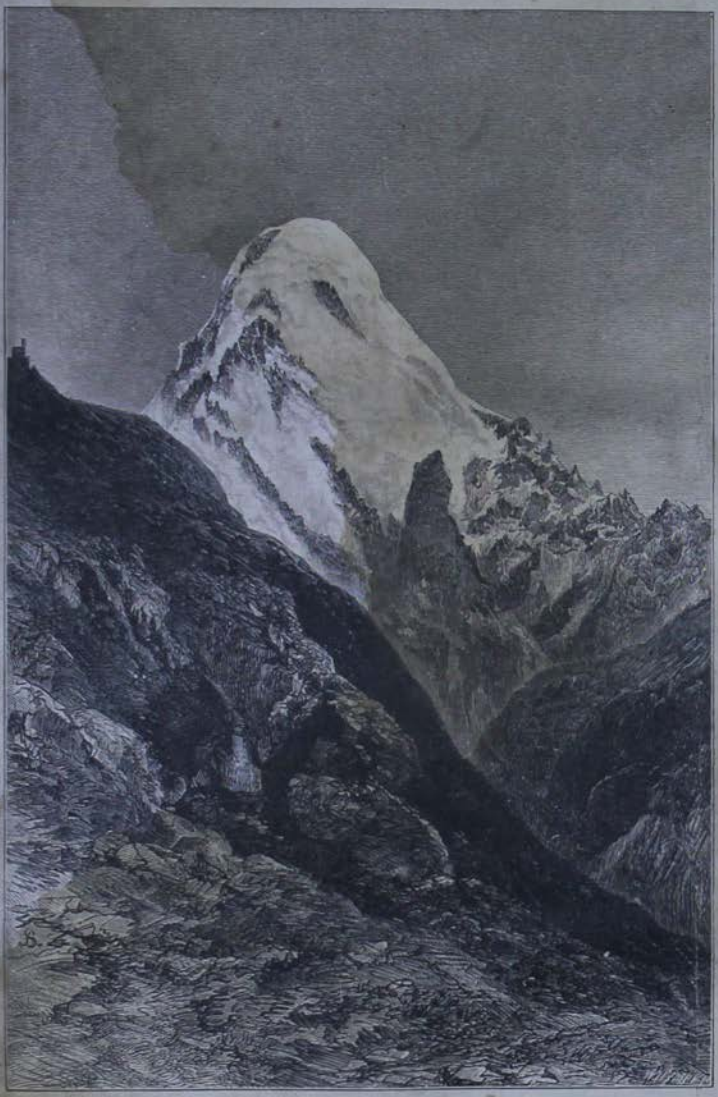
00058764

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
Town Hall, Bombay.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 05 October, 2018



KASBEC, ABOVE THE PASS OF DARIEL. [*Frontispiece.*

TRAVELS

IN THE

EASTERN CAUCASUS,

ON THE

CASPIAN AND BLACK SEAS, ESPECIALLY IN DAGHESTAN, AND ON THE FRONTIERS OF PERSIA AND TURKEY,

DURING THE SUMMER OF 1871.

58764

LIEUT.-GEN. SIR ARTHUR THURLOW CUNYNGHAME,
K.C.B., F.R.G.S.,

OFFICER OF THE LEGION OF HONOUR, SECOND CLASS OF THE IMPERIAL ORDER OF THE MEDJIDIE,

AUTHOR OF "AN AIDE-DE-CAMP'S RECOLLECTION OF SERVICE IN CHINA," AND "A GLIMPSE OF THE GREAT WESTERN REPUBLIC."

ILLUSTRATED

BY HENRY HARDINGE CUNYNGHAME
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

WITH MAPS.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1872.

LONDON:
BRADBURY, EVANS, AND CO., PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

GEORGE, DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE, K.G., G.C.B., K.P., G.C.M.G.,

IN MEMORY OF DANGERS UNDERGONE IN THE SAME FIELD
DURING THE CRIMEAN WAR,

AND IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF MUCH KINDNESS AND CONSIDERATION,
THIS BOOK, BY PERMISSION, IS

Dedicated.

PREFACE.

The following pages merely profess to be a record of summer travel. No pretence is made to give a complete account of the countries passed through, nor to elaborate theories respecting them. The author has endeavoured to play the part of an observer, rather than that of the politician—to relate rather what he has seen than what he supposes—to record facts, not to labour to account for them. Some information respecting them will be found here.

A special interest attaches to some of the subjects which have fallen under the author's observation in this tour.

The Fortifications on the Black Sea have lately attracted much attention.

With the gradual extinction of the Kalmuck settlements, the last remnants of heathen Idolatry in Europe will probably soon disappear.

The Library at the Armenian convent at Etchmiazin, on the borders of Persia and Turkey, but recently rendered accessible, will not only throw great light on the ancient history of Turkey and Armenia, but will no doubt supply from its very ancient manuscripts new readings of disputed passages in the Bible.

At present the question of ancient village communities is under keen discussion. A considerable part of the book is devoted to travel in the villages in the Caucasus, where some of the most ancient communities exist. The author, therefore, hopes that those who are studying such subjects will find in this work some points of interest, and that the description of the scene of Shamyl's patriotism and valour will also be acceptable.

But it is to the general reader and lover of travel that the book is principally addressed. It was written amid the scenes which it describes—often in waggons, sometimes on horseback, but never in leisure or comfort. The writer, therefore, begs for indulgence towards his many faults. The drawings were executed by his son on the spot, some in colours and neutral tint, some in pen and pencil. It is sufficient to mention Mr. Whymper's name in connection with them to invite attention to

the admirable treatment they have since received at his hands.

Should this account excite a desire in any lover of sport or travel to visit the Caucasus, the author will feel that his labour has been rewarded; but failing this, he must hope to render pleasant a few fireside hours.

In conclusion, he wishes to acknowledge his gratitude to the Russian military and civil officials, who did so much to render his tour agreeable, and without whose assistance it would have been utterly impossible.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

PROPOSED ROUTE 1

CHAPTER II.

LONDON TO COLOGNE 4

CHAPTER III.

COLOGNE TO VIENNA 10

CHAPTER IV.

VIENNA 16

CHAPTER V.

THE CAMP OF BRUCK—THE AUSTRIAN CAMP OF EXERCISE NEAR VIENNA 22

CHAPTER VI.

PESTH AND BASIASCH—THE TERMINATION OF THE RAILWAY ON THE DANUBE 28

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE DANUBE—PASSING THROUGH THE IRON GATES 34

CHAPTER VIII.

DOWN THE DANUBE TO KALAFAT AND RUSTCHUK 40

CHAPTER IX.

TO BUCHAREST, BY GIURGIEVO 46

CHAPTER X.

PAGE
BUCHAREST, THE CAPITAL OF ROUMANIA 49

CHAPTER XI.

SCHUMLA—OSMAN PASHA AND THE SULTAN'S TROOPS—REMARKS UPON THE FORTIFICATIONS 59

CHAPTER XII.

VARNA, ON THE BLACK SEA 66

CHAPTER XIII.

STEAMER TO CONSTANTINOPLE—REMARKS REGARDING STEAM COMMUNICATION, ETC. 71

CHAPTER XIV.

CONSTANTINOPLE—THE SERPENT OF BRASS 75

CHAPTER XV.

ODESSA, WITH OBSERVATIONS ON THE PORT 83

CHAPTER XVI.

NICOLAEF—SOME ACCOUNT OF THE DOCKS, AND REMARKS UPON THE PROSPECT OF PRODUCING IRONCLADS, ETC. 90

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CRIMEA—THE JOURNEY FROM YALTA, WITH A FEW WORDS RESPECTING THE PALACE OF LAVADIA, ETC. 95

CHAPTER XVIII.

SEBASTOPOL AND ITS RUINS 101

CHAPTER XIX.

BALACLAVA—THE TARTAR PALACE, WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF ITS STATE DURING THE WAR 106

CHAPTER XX.

PAGE
THE BATTLE OF INKERMAN—A PERSONAL NARRATIVE OF THE BATTLE 112

CHAPTER XXI.

THE FIELDS OF INKERMAN AND THE CAVES, CHAPEL, ETC. . . 119

CHAPTER XXII.

KERTCH, WITH REMARKS REGARDING THE RECENTLY ERECTED FORTIFICATIONS 127

CHAPTER XXIII.

SEA OF AZOF, AND OBSERVATIONS ON TAGANROG 134

CHAPTER XXIV.

ON THE DON AND THE DON COSSACKS 140

CHAPTER XXV.

ON THE VOLGA, WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE BHUDDIST TEMPLE OF THE KALMUCKS 145

CHAPTER XXVI.

ASTRAKHAN, AT THE MOUTH OF THE VOLGA. 150

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE KALMUCK SETTLEMENT ON THE WESTERN BANK OF THE VOLGA —AN ACCOUNT OF THE RELIGIOUS RITES, ETC. 154

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ASTRAKHAN, WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE KREMLIN 164

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE CASPIAN SEA—OBSERVATIONS ON ITS DEPTH, AND GENERALLY REGARDING IT 166

CHAPTER XXX.

PAGE
PETROLVKS AND TSURA—THE MARCH INTO DAGHESTAN . . . 175

CHAPTER XXXI.

FROM TSURA TO GUINIB—THE STRONGHOLD OF SHAMYL, WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE ROUTE TO IT 183

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE FORT OF GUINIB—SHAMYL'S LAST STRUGGLE 191

CHAPTER XXXIII.

HONSAK AND BODLITH—RECEPTION BY THE GENERALS IN COMMAND AT THESE STATIONS 200

CHAPTER XXXIV.

FROM BODLITH TO WEDDEN, WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE DEFEAT OF PRINCE WORONZOFF BY THE CIRCASSIANS 216

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE FORT OF WEDDEN—THE PRISON OF THE PRINCESS CHAFCHEVADSY 227

CHAPTER XXXVI.

FROM GROSNIA TO VLADICAVCAS—SHOOTING IN THE MOUNTAINS—IBEX, RED DEER, ETC. 234

CHAPTER XXXVII.

PASS OF DARIEL AND MOUNT KASBEC—A DESCRIPTION OF THIS MAGNIFICENT MOUNTAIN 243

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE GRAND DUKE MICHAEL, GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE CAUCASUS. 252

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE CITY OF TIFLIS, THE CAPITAL OF GEORGIA 257

CHAPTER XL.

PAGE
KAJORI—A MOUNTAIN RETREAT FROM TIFLIS 262

CHAPTER XLI.

TIFLIS TO ERIVAN—FIRST VIEW OF MOUNT ARARAT . . . 271

CHAPTER XLII.

ERIVAN—ACCOUNT OF THE FORT—THE MOSQUE—BAZAARS, ETC. . . 276

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE CONVENT OF ETCHMIAZIN NEAR MOUNT ARARAT . . . 283

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE TURKISH FRONTIER—RECEPTION AT SARDARABAT 292

CHAPTER XLV.

FROM ALEXANDROPOL TO BORJOME—REMARKS ON THE FORT OF ALEXANDROPOL AND THE FORT OF ALHATSHIKH . . . 299

CHAPTER XLVI.

BORJOME—THE COUNTRY PALACE OF THE GRAND DUKE . . . 307

CHAPTER XLVII.

POTI AND ITS RAILWAY—REMARKS UPON THE ROADSTEAD AND RIVER RION 313

CHAPTER XLVIII.

TRAVELLING IN THE CAUCASUS—GENERAL REMARKS UPON—ROUTE TO BE CHOSEN, ETC. 319

CHAPTER XLIX.

GEORGIA UNDER THE RUSSIANS—ITS DEVELOPMENT, ETC. . . . 329

CHAPTER L.

THE RUSSIAN ARMY 334

CHAPTER LI.

PAGE

SPORTING IN THE CAUCASUS, WITH OBSERVATIONS ON THE GAME AND PLACES TO FIND IT 338

CHAPTER LII.

ON THE BLACK SEA HOMEWARDS 343

CHAPTER LIII.

RETURN TO ENGLAND 350

APPENDIX 357

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

		PAGE
KASBEC	*Frontispiece.*	
MAP OF CAUCASUS AND DHAGESTAN.	(*To face*)	1
ANCIENT TURKISH BATHS AT PESTH	(*To face*)	29
ROUGH COUNTRY CART, ORSOVA		35
TURKISH AQUEDUCT NEAR MEHADIA		38
RECEPTION BY MUSHIR PASHA AT SCHUMLA		62
SCUTARI—THE TURKISH BARRACK, HOSPITAL, AND MONUMENT TO BRITISH SOLDIERS	(*To face*)	70
THE BRAZEN SERPENT FROM DELPHI, NOW AT CONSTANTINOPLE	(*To face*)	75
COLUMN IN THE MOSQUE OF SULIMAN		76
THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL AS IT NOW IS.	(*To face*)	96
MALAKOFF		110
STUCK ON A SANDBANK UP THE DON		142
MOONLIGHT, ASTRAKHAN		152
PASS NEAR GUINIB		186
SHAMYL'S VILLAGE, GUINIB		198
TARTAR HOUSE, CHOK		199
PASS NEAR GUINIB		201

PAGE

ON RIVER OOR, INKULLUK 211

A LESGHIAN SOLDIER 223

PASS OF DARIEL 244

CONVENT CHURCH NEAR KASBEC 250

TIFLIS, THE CAPITAL OF GEORGIA . . . . . (*To face*) 257

THE MOSQUE AND BATHS AT ERIVAN, WITH MOUNT ARARAT IN THE BACKGROUND 278

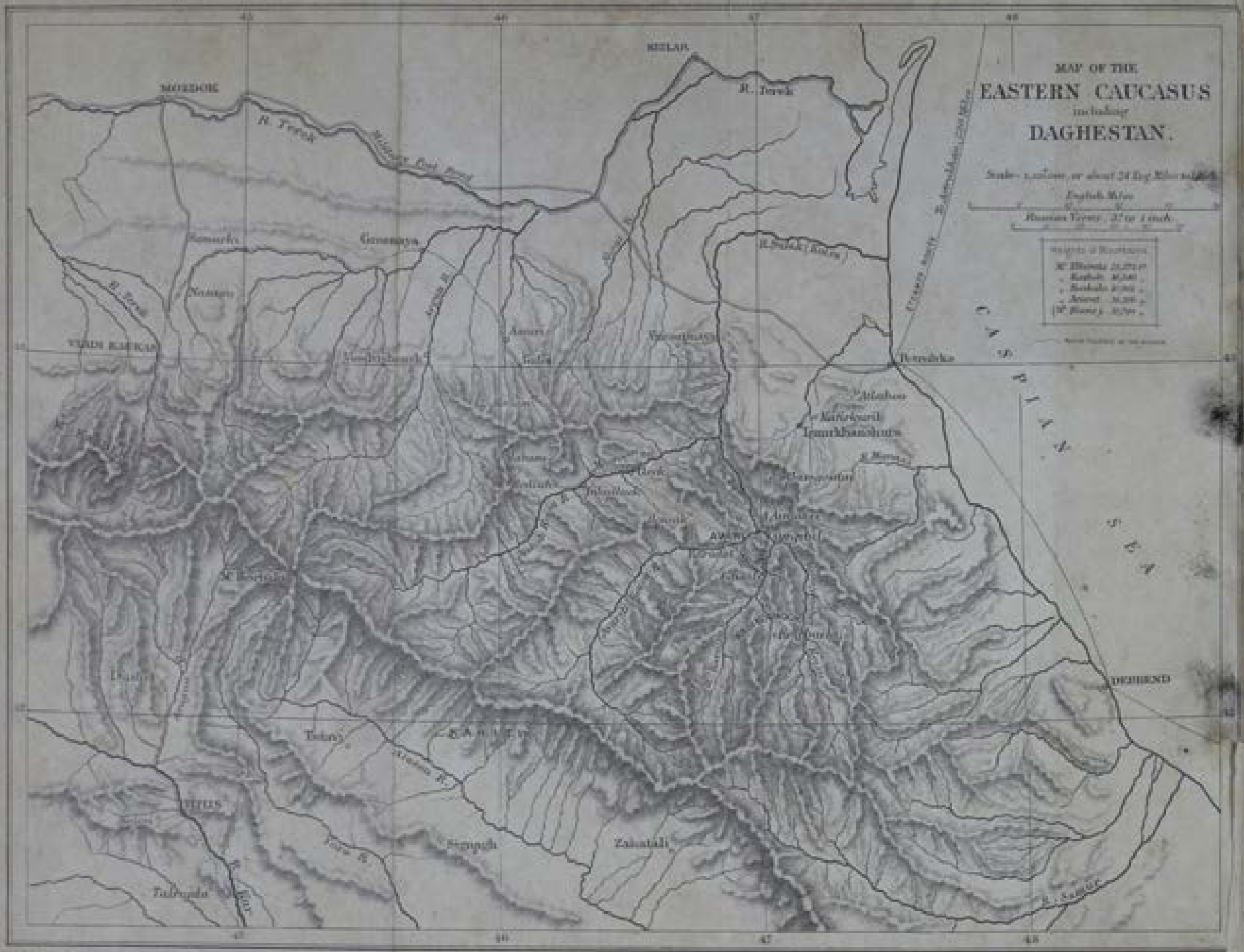
PORCH OF THE CHURCH AT ETCHMIAZIN, FOUNDED A.D. 300 (*To face*) 285

A CASTLE NEAR KIRKLISS 303

TREBIZONDE 345

QUARANTINE 353

GENERAL MAP—AUTHOR'S ROUTE . . . . . (*At the end*)


MAP OF THE
EASTERN CAUCASUS
including
DAGHESTAN.
Scale
English Miles
Russian Versts
R. Terek
R. Sulak (Koisu)
Derbend
Temir Khan Shura
Tarki
Andi
Tabasaran
Zakatali
Kuba
Shemakha
Baku
Caspian Sea

TRAVELS IN THE EASTERN CAUCASUS

AND ON THE

CASPIAN AND BLACK SEAS.

CHAPTER I.

PROPOSED ROUTE.

I DETERMINED to devote the summer of 1871 to travelling. Various circumstances, including official duties, had for many past years forbidden me this indulgence. I was anxious, moreover, to give to my son, who was pursuing his studies at Cambridge, the opportunity of accompanying me, that, by an entire relaxation during the summer months from his laborious occupations, he might have a perfect rest of mind, if not of body.

The question arose as to what part of the world we should visit; we wished to visit a new and untravelled country; while, at the same time, our absence from home was restricted to the period of the College vacation.

After mature consideration, we determined that the Caspian and the Caucasus were perhaps the only fields which would fulfil these conditions, and which would also afford me the opportunity of revisiting the Crimea, and of introducing my son to that interesting locality.

Having come to this decision, we had to consider what could be accomplished in the time allowed to us; so that, on the one

hand, we might embrace as extended a field as possible in our expedition, and on the other, that we might devote to each object and place such an amount of time, as would allow us to take notes of, and remember any points of interest. It was requisite to sketch out, not only the general features of our tour, but, with some detail, the time we could allow for each of the principal divisions of it, as we could only be abroad from about the middle of June to the middle of October.

I was inclined to think that with diligence and good health we could visit Vienna, Bucharest, Varna, Constantinople, then Odessa and the Crimea, thence the Caucasus, either entering it by Southern Russia, or direct by Imeretia, and, on our return, we might visit some of the cities on the southern coast of the Black Sea. At first sight, many persons would be inclined to think that in our anticipations we had embraced a field far too extended, and such as would allow us to do no more than give the most cursory glance at each country which we entered; but I trust that the recital of our travels will show that, although we exceeded our proposed route, yet we successfully accomplished our wishes, and, although we visited some districts quite unknown to the usual traveller, and succeeded in finding unvisited ground, even in Europe, we neither travelled too rapidly, nor were prevented from being able to impart, after our visit, some of the pleasing impressions which these scenes gave us, while we were passing through them.

We were well aware that the various languages which we should meet with, would cause us some difficulties, but not such as would be insuperable to persons possessing a general knowledge of European languages, and some acquaintance with Eastern ones. I was also anxious that our expenditure should be limited within reasonable bounds, yet without stinting ourselves of such advantages as we could properly command. I determined to keep

a careful account of every day's journey and expenses, as I considered this would be both interesting at a future time to ourselves, and useful to some future traveller. We also hoped to be successful in bringing home a series of sketches of a country so little visited as either the Cis or Trans-Caucasus. And if, added to this, we should be enabled to throw any light upon the subject of the warlike preparations which Russia was said to be making on the borders of the Black Sea, an additional interest would be imparted to our travels.

One difficulty presented itself, which is of an unusual character in Europe, viz., the almost perfect blank as regards books of information respecting the Caucasus. It appeared, in this respect, almost a *terra incognita*. For although in Murray's handbook Russia is very exhaustively treated, yet information as regards the Caucasus is very scanty; indeed, by no means such as would enable a traveller to work his way through the country by handbook alone. This want I desired in some measure to supply; and for that purpose I propose to add a few tables, containing all the principal routes, both in Cis and Trans-Caucasus, with their distances, &c.

The very fact of being unable to procure the above information was in itself a charm, as unmistakeably proving that even in Europe there was yet a district little known. This made us the more desirous of seeking and exploring it; and the result showed that we were not mistaken.

I will no longer dwell upon our hopes and anticipations, but will enter upon a brief account of our experiences from the period of our leaving London until our return.

CHAPTER II.

LONDON TO COLOGNE.

On the evening of Friday the 9th June, we left London, arriving in Antwerp on the following morning. The solemn beauty of the magnificent cathedral struck me more on this occasion than it had ever previously done. The cleanliness of the lower orders of the people, and their apparent devotion at the service as well as their earnestness, were especially remarkable. We did not delay long in Antwerp, as a recent visit to that city had given both to my son and myself an opportunity of examining its extensive fortifications.

On that occasion General Reynard had given us every possible facility of making ourselves acquainted with the whole system of these works, which may be considered as perfect as any in Europe. He had personally explained their general features and intention, and shown the advantages which Belgium expected to derive, in case of emergency, from the assistance of England. No one who has not gone somewhat into this subject, or had the opportunities, which, by permission of the King of the Belgians, were placed within our reach, can form a due conception of the completeness of these works, nor of the value which may be set upon them in case such a complication of circumstances should arise, as was very nearly brought about by the Emperor of the French, shortly before the war between Prussia and Austria.

We arrived in Brussels for a late breakfast, putting up at the Hôtel de la Poste, the most comfortable hotel in that city.

While we were there, a fearful accident very nearly happened to a young English lady, who was staying in the hotel with her family. The window of her sleeping-room, which opened almost to the floor, overlooked a flat skylight; and having been accustomed in England to walk over thick glass, she, without due thought or examination, opening the window, fearlessly stepped out. Tripping very lightly she passed over one or two panes, but the next gave way under her. With the utmost agility and presence of mind, she sprang back to the window, and contrived, with the assistance of her sister, to regain the room. It was wonderful how she escaped being dashed to pieces in the stone hall beneath.

We remained at Brussels only sufficient time to walk in the Park, and to admire the steady progress of this rising city, in which the cleanliness of the inhabitants and of their houses, their orderly and excellent arrangements, their general kindness to strangers, the remarkable excellence and moderate charges of their restaurants, deserve the highest commendation, and certainly a better fate than that which they narrowly escaped—a junction with their unfortunate southern neighbour. The majority of the inhabitants seem well aware that such a junction would have been very far from conferring upon them the promised benefits.

We arrived at Aix-la-Chapelle late on Saturday evening. It was interesting to observe the number of wounded officers of the Prussian army, who were seeking their recovery at these waters and baths; in many instances their wounds were of so serious a nature as to compel them to resort to the assistance of their servants to receive their glasses of water from the spring, they being unable to descend the inconvenient, steep, and winding

stairs which meet the aged as well as the young before they can obtain the precious water.

As it was known we were only temporary lodgers, the servants and porter at the Hotel Nuellens did not give themselves the trouble to render us much civility; we therefore dined at Madame Delmar's, where we received the usual kindness and attention from the amiable old lady who presides over that establishment.

On Sunday, June the 11th, there was to have been a magnificent procession at Aix-la-Chapelle, a thanksgiving for the wonderful victories accorded to the arms of Germany; the weather, however, was so bad, that the ceremony could not take place. It was worth while to observe the quiet phlegmatic way in which the Germans accepted this disappointment, which English or Frenchmen would have vehemently deplored.

Late in the evening we started for Cologne, and arrived in time to attend the last evening service at this truly wonderful and stupendous Cathedral. During the last twenty-five years I have constantly visited Cologne, and it has always been with the liveliest feelings of satisfaction and pleasure that I have observed the gradual but steady progress of its magnificent Cathedral towards completion. It is said that it will take yet sixteen years to finish it, and then there can be no doubt but that it will be the finest Gothic cathedral in Europe, with the single exception, perhaps, of that of Seville.

I observed many strangers present at this service; amongst them a gentleman apparently studying his breviary with great earnestness, and very much to the satisfaction of some soldiers, who were admiring his devotion. On leaving the Cathedral I had occasion to pass near this gentleman, when I observed that the book to which he had devoted such unremitting attention was an edition of our old friend Bradshaw.

Late in the evening we strolled up to the Railway Station, and I was particularly struck with many points of a military character connected with the arrangements of the Prussian army. The dress both of officers and men was sensible and soldierlike, and the body of men about to proceed to Berlin were embarked in the train in a most orderly manner. This body consisted of a chosen delegation from every Corps in the Service, who have to represent their respective Regiments at the grand fêtes which are to take place on the entry of the army into Berlin, in commemoration of the late victories.

I may observe, that all the officers, with the exception of the General Commanding and his immediate staff, travelled in the second class—there was but little personal baggage, as uniform is the sole dress of the officers of this army, and so easy and convenient is it in its form, that no dress would be adopted by themselves in preference to it. The calm and steady demeanour of both men and officers, the business-like way in which they performed their duty, could not fail to leave a very satisfactory impression upon any one acquainted with the profession.

Some of the men who belonged, I was told, to the Army of Brandenberg, particularly deserved attention. These soldiers are looked upon as the toughest men in the army: born in a sterile region, their early life is a continued fight and struggle with nature. At Gravelotte they are said to have borne the brunt of the battle for fifteen successive hours; but when, after this severe exertion, it was given out that their attendance on parade was not considered requisite, they to a man scouted such unheard of relaxation, and voluntarily placed themselves in the ranks as usual. To this principality the Prince Bismarck belongs, and proud he may be of having sprung from such a race, and proud they may be of numbering such a remarkable man amongst their countrymen.

Germany deserves the utmost credit for the way in which the exertions of her warriors were acknowledged, and their sacrifices rewarded. The organization and tone of her army cannot be surpassed; the manner in which her commissariat arrangements were formed and carried into effect cannot be too highly extolled; a hearty goodwill in the profession appears to pervade all ranks, and a thoroughly military spirit to reign supreme; their sober earnestness, devoid of all hurry and confusion or frivolity, is particularly striking.

The laws of honour, I am informed upon excellent authority, are preserved with the utmost exactitude; so that no friendship, I might even say, no relationship, could exonerate an officer from the obligation to maintain them. This subject deserves and receives the utmost consideration amongst military men, the obligation respecting personal honour having, perhaps, more to do with chivalry in the profession than some may imagine; and the military regulations on this point stamp a character on a class, whose chief reward is the high consideration in which it is held in their country.

Not long since some Polish officers in the Prussian service came to a mutual agreement, for friendship sake, that they would never fight a duel amongst themselves; but this coming to the ears of the King, appeared to him so serious an interference with the laws of honour, that he directed that every one who had entered into this compact should quit his service. So strong is the obligation in Prussia for an officer to preserve his honour, that, if struck by a civilian, he is compelled, actually obliged, by the military code, to run his sword through him, whatever may be the future consequences to himself.

A Prussian officer is bound at all times to appear in uniform. Even at the Races at Berlin the Emperor is displeased unless the officers of his army who ride, do so in their undress regimentals,

and not in a jockey turnout, and, on one occasion, he was dreadfully annoyed with a young noble who transgressed his wishes in this particular.

Social position in Prussia would appear to be restricted wholly to the well-born, and military officers. However intelligent, and however wealthy, no one, unless nobly born, can rise in the social scale. This disgusts large numbers of the intelligent and of those who have made themselves wealthy by their industry, and must tend to lessen that support to the Throne, which otherwise they are inclined so cheerfully to give.

Standard examinations, not competitive, seem to be in Prussia the rule for preferment; every candidate for Government employ, whether he be noble or not, must undergo them; but, having passed them, the nobly-born can rise to any eminence in the state, whereas to one not so born this is almost impossible, but he must content himself, after passing a most severe examination, with such a post as a village postmastership, on say fifty pounds a year, probably for the rest of his days, watching the good fortune of his nobly-born contemporary, who is rising to the highest honours in the state.

CHAPTER III.

COLOGNE TO VIENNA.

On Monday the 12th June, we were up by cock-crow, taking our seats in the train for Munich, at 6 A.M.

We were not required to change our carriages during this entire distance, which was a pleasant innovation on the usual annoying changes, common to all continental travelling. I need scarcely allude to the towns of Coblentz, Mayence, &c., &c., which we passed at a rattling pace, except that at each there was a display of military emblems and banners, and other marks of rejoicing in honour of the troops who were daily returning in large numbers from France.

At Aix-la-Chapelle we had witnessed a severe storm, accompanied by torrents of rain; this storm was travelling towards the east at a rate of about ten miles per hour. We overtook it at Darmstadt, as we were travelling at the rate of twenty miles; we accompanied it as far as Munich. On the following day we overtook it at Salzburg and Linz, and finally again at Vienna. It was most singular thus to trace, right across Europe, the progress of a storm—continually overstepping it, by the greater rapidity of our journey, and then while resting at these cities, to watch its forward progress in one unvarying course towards the east.

We arrived at Munich late in the evening, taking up our quarters in the centre of the town, at the Hotel Maximilian.

On the following morning, the first thing we visited was the beautiful statue of the Protectress of Munich by Schwanthaler. It is cast in bronze, and does the greatest credit to that renowned artist. It is upwards of sixty feet high, and so great is the size of the figure, that it is not difficult to move about in the interior of its head: and this I had done some years before.

We also devoted some hours of the day to visiting the Glyptothek and the Pinacothek; we could only pay a cursory visit to these interesting galleries, as we could not afford to linger in Europe, when all our desires were centered in the farther East. I may mention, however, that we visited that most magnificent Byzantine chapel, so gorgeous and yet so darkly tranquil, which was one of the most successful conceptions of the artistic King, to whom so much of the renown of Munich is due. The late King spent his life in his endeavour to make Munich renowned, in which no doubt he certainly succeeded to a wonderful extent. Nothing, however, can compensate for its want of river communication. To this may be attributed the difficulties he met with in his endeavours to improve the trade of the city. Had it rested on the navigable parts of the Rhine or the Danube, Munich, with half the exertions of the late King, would doubtless have become one of the most rising cities in Europe—as renowned for commerce as it now is for art. The streets in the new town of Munich are very wide, and so well suited to tramways that I was much surprised not to see any in use.

We left Munich in the evening for Vienna; the magnificent Alps of the Tyrol shewing grandly on the south side of our road.

We remained a few minutes at the station nearest to the now far-famed village of Ober Ammergau. We were informed that a large number of strangers, and especially English, had already engaged rooms at fabulous prices, at the village, to witness the

next representation of the Passion Play, which was to be acted there twice that month. I cannot quite reconcile to myself the idea of the representation of so serious a drama, nor the fact that the man who on Sunday personifies our blessed Saviour, is, on a week day, to be seen at his usual occupation as a common workman; and that he was not even exempt from the conscription, but was obliged to accompany the army into France as a common soldier. These facts militate against the reverence which otherwise might have been felt for his person. But still we were assured that many persons who attended at this representation were so deeply affected with the scene that, far from viewing it as an amusing spectacle, they went away filled with wholesome religious awe.

We remained only a few hours at Salzburg, as, having previously visited Ischl, we did not linger to see again its beautiful scenery.

On our arrival at Linz, on the morning of the 14th June, we were struck with admiration at the noble Danube. Linz is very beautifully situated on its banks: it is fortified by a circle of redoubts built on the neighbouring heights. A fine stone bridge is in course of erection over the Danube.

Before leaving we had sufficient time to attend a most impressive service in the Cathedral Church in the city, and we were sensibly impressed with the devotion of the congregation. The music was wonderfully fine, the church handsomely decorated, and in excellent taste.

Punctually at 8 A.M. we started down the river, in a very nice little steamboat for Vienna, preferring the river to the rail, as we thought our journey would be far more interesting by water, although rather longer in point of time.

We were surprised at the charges on board these Danube boats, which made us aware that we had now reached the lands of

autocratic monopoly, where not only must a profit accrue to the shareholders of every company, but the State, and the grandees in the State, must also have their share; and as we passed through Austria, even in Hungary, we found that this rule held good; a Grand Duke here, and an Arch-Duke there, generally standing directly in the road to improvement, and waving his banner of monopoly in the face of all progress, until enormously compensated.

The scenery below Linz is very lovely, and not unlike the Rhine above Cologne; but more sublime, and on a larger scale.

On arriving within four or five miles of Vienna, we were transferred to a smaller boat; shortly after which we entered a canal, which has been constructed to lead almost into the interior of the city. About 6 P.M. we disembarked on a noble quay.

The buildings which line the new boulevards far surpass in magnificence anything of the kind in Paris, or any other city in Europe that I have seen. The improvements generally in this city, since I visited it in 1848, far exceed anything which I could have imagined. Very excellent use has been made of the ground upon which the fortifications formerly stood. In the place of these old walls and ditches were now erected magnificent mansions, boulevards, gardens, and splendid buildings. Then entirely surrounding the old city, and between it and the new one, fine open spaces, most artistically laid out for the amusement of all classes of the inhabitants, now exist, allowing a full current of air to permeate the entire city, giving to the inhabitants, within easy access, the most delightful places of recreation; and, by the wonderful good taste with which the whole has been carried out, making Vienna, in my opinion, the most beautiful city in Europe.

We drove to the Arch-Duke Charles Hotel, situated in the heart of the old town; but I confess that I think we made a

mistake, as I would now prefer an hotel on the boulevards, or in the more open part of the town—the enclosed situation of the Arch-Duke being in no way compensated by the rooms or attendance, and certainly not by the bill which met us on our departure.

The first morning after our arrival, the 15th of June, we spent in visiting the old city, the Cathedral, &c., &c. We also called upon his Excellency Lord Bloomfield, her Majesty's ambassador, who, most kindly, not only expressed his readiness to obtain for us permission to see anything of interest in Vienna, but presented us with letters of introduction to Count Kuhn, Minister of War, who received us most graciously, and was pleased to direct Count Heller von Hellwald, an officer on the Staff of the Etat Major, to attend us, with instructions to give us facilities, during our stay in the capital, to see everything, military or civil, which we might wish—a mark of consideration for which I endeavoured to express my gratitude. The Minister of War spoke English exceedingly well, and seemed to feel pleased that officers of other nations should take an interest in the military affairs of Austria.

Lieutenant Count Heller de Hellwald is an exceedingly intelligent man, speaking and writing English, and many other foreign languages, with ease and fluency. He entered the military service when very young, and soon after retired from it, in order to adopt scientific pursuits. On the occasion of the Emperor Maximilian proceeding to Mexico, Count Hellwald was appointed to his staff in a scientific position, which, when the revolution in Mexico broke out, he again exchanged for a military one, the more readily as he saw the Emperor in danger. He gave us many interesting accounts of his adventurous life in Mexico. He is now established as a staff officer in the bureau of his Excellency the Minister of War. We cannot speak in too grateful terms of his kindness and attention during our stay in Vienna.

In the evening we went to the Opera, the representation being Faust and Marguerite. Both in its external appearance, and in its internal arrangement and decoration, this Opera-house may be considered the first in the world. We were fortunate in witnessing one of the finest German operas, represented in its parent country, and language, with every adjunct of actors, scenery, music, chorus not to be surpassed in talent or scientific management; while the fact that officers and Government officials are obliged to attend in their uniforms, or official dresses, adds materially to the brilliancy of the theatre. His Imperial Majesty appeared in uniform, on the left hand, and two or more of the Grand Dukes on the right of the house.

The excellent taste evinced in the ballet is deserving of mention; for although all the wonderful feats in dancing which may be seen in Paris were carried out in Vienna, yet the whole appeared free from that vulgarity which I have observed at the French opera.

The Opera had, fortunately for us, been kept open a few days longer than usual, in consequence of the expected arrival of the King of Greece.

CHAPTER IV.

VIENNA.

THE morning of the 16th of June we devoted to an inspection of the great Arsenal, a magnificent and immense building of red stone, in the new city.

The centre portion in the front is set apart as a sort of Walhalla. The entrance hall and staircase are magnificently decorated, and filled with statues, in white marble, of various distinguished marshals and generals of the Empire. The upper rooms, noble in size, are profusely decorated, and painted in fresco with battle scenes of the old wars with Napoleon; and are also devoted to the preservation of a most valuable and curious collection of ancient armour and warlike instruments, the private property of the Emperor.

The remainder of the building is constructed to hold seven thousand troops, with workshops for the construction of cannon and the reparation of small arms, store-houses for guns, limbers, and waggons, &c., &c. The Austrians, however, would seem to be somewhat backward in their manufacture of cannon; their guns are all cast solid, and then bored out. The iron is brought from Styria, and is said to be of a very superior quality; but I observed that it was allowed to heat under the process of turning, thus blunting their tools. We saw some of the newest mitrail-

lcuse guns, which they had just received, and were commencing to experiment with. But we were surprised to find that they apparently were unacquainted with the chilled shot, and many other modern scientific improvements.

In the afternoon we went, by invitation of the Ambassador, to dine with him at Baden, about fifteen miles by rail from Vienna. It is a delightful watering-place, possessing baths and springs, and is becoming of immense repute, its proximity to Vienna enabling the wealthy citizens to reach it with ease after their hours of business. We returned by a late train to Vienna, where, to our surprise, we found the platform crowded with richly dressed officials, who were in attendance to meet the King of Greece. We now discovered that the King was, with his suite, in the same train with ourselves.

The 17th June we devoted first to a visit to the Rodolf Caserne, a very large barrack, constructed to hold about two thousand men, built very much after the same pattern as the Arsenal. It is formed into four squares, four stories high, with wide corridors running round the interior of each building, on each story. The plan is simple, and exceedingly convenient. On each story, in addition to the rooms for the private soldiers, there are apartments for officers, and rooms for non-commissioned officers, cooking and washing-rooms, store-rooms, &c., &c., and I am bound to say they all appeared clean and kept in good order. In the cavalry square the horses appeared to be provided with very lofty and cool stables, and not over-crowded; the ventilation also was good, a most important point. The same system obtained here which some years since I observed to be practised in the Turkish army; that is, of not removing the litter of the horses more frequently than once in three or four weeks. Singular as it may appear, this is not attended with the inconvenience which might have been expected, and results in a very large saving

of straw, diminishing the daily allowance to about four pounds per horse.

The horses seemed well-bred, rather small, but in cruelly low condition, which was to be accounted for by the very low ration which they gave them, and which I understood to be 5 lb. of corn, 8 lb. of hay, and 4 lb. of straw daily, being, as regards corn and straw, exactly the half of what we consider a proper ration for a cavalry horse.

The Austrian soldiers of all arms seemed to be strong men, but not robust. Their pay is very small indeed, and they are provided by the Government with only one meal a day, an old system which is now being exploded in all European armies, and is retained only, I believe, in Turkey. In their dress the Austrians appear to have entirely relinquished their ancient national colour, white. The cavalry are now generally dressed in a blue jacket with four pockets—a sort of Norfolk jacket; a second jacket or pelisse is either slung over the left shoulder, or worn, in cold weather, over the first jacket. They wear loose brick-dust trousers and Hessian boots, so constructed with a strap and buckle behind as to enable them either to be drawn over the knees or to be wrinkled down about the ankles. This combines the most serviceable and the smartest plan I have yet seen, and is well worthy of being tried and reported upon by our experienced cavalry officers. Had I been acquainted with this plan when on service in the Crimea, how gladly would I have availed myself of it.

The forage cap of this army is simple, neat, and very convenient, and can be turned at pleasure into a most comfortable cap for the night. The dress cap is generally pretty, but by no means a convenient head-dress. The men in lancer regiments appear to be too heavily armed; as, in addition to their lance, they carry a sword, a carbine, and I believe a pistol. The dress

of the artillery is dark-brown, with very dark-blue trousers, ornamented with small red piping; that of the infantry is now blue, with lightish-blue trousers. The Hungarians wear tight pantaloons, and boots with very high and exceedingly small heels, like those recently introduced by ladies into England.

It has been the habit in England to regard service in the Austrian cavalry as the most agreeable imaginable. This may possibly at one time have been the case, but if so, it is certainly now entirely changed. Almost the whole cavalry force of the empire are now detached in squadrons over every portion of the country, in all the small, distant, and out-of-the-way towns and villages, almost universally in billets. With rare exceptions, there are no cavalry barracks at all in Austria, and it has been found that the most economical way of feeding the horses is to keep comparatively few together. This, however, compels these gaily-dressed officers to content themselves with the poorest villages as their homes, distant from all society of their own standing and class, and from much intellectual amusement and recreation—a plan exceedingly pernicious to the well-being of the army.

Count Heller took the greatest pains to explain every portion of the system upon which we desired information, and the officers were most obliging to us in every way.

On leaving the barracks we took advantage of the carriages on the tramway to take us to Schönbrünn, the country palace of the Emperor, and entered the gardens beneath the archway, near which the great Napoleon so nearly met his death by the hand of an assassin. The gardens at Schönbrunn are very pretty and well kept, but I do not consider there is anything particularly striking about them.

The system of tramways at Vienna is the most perfect institution of its kind. Fortunately on the boulevards plenty of room

has been allowed for a wide centre road, with two rows of trees, and two wide side roads. As the tramways on the boulevards entirely encircle the city, and also radiate to many of the suburbs, they afford the greatest imaginable facilities for locomotion to every point which can be desired. The carriages are most comfortable, very low and easy of access; the seats are ranged on either side, the whole being well covered over to screen the sun. They are sometimes overcrowded, causing a first-comer to relinquish his seat to a lady entering the carriage. This however, in Vienna is the less annoying by reason of its being almost certain that the person in whose favour it is relinquished is most agreeable and handsome. The price for seats is exceedingly moderate, but so nice are these carriages, that although it is altogether forbidden to officers to make use of the omnibuses which traverse the city, yet they are freely permitted to use the tramway carriages. Although this system of locomotion is so perfect in the wide streets and boulevards of Vienna, and would be equally so in Munich, or most Hungarian and Russian towns, I very much doubt its applicability to Paris, or any of the more crowded parts of London or Dublin.

Returning to Vienna by the tramway, we went almost round the city, and then walked down to the Prater, the Hyde Park of Vienna. The long drives and sides of the Prater are, at the correct seasons and hours, filled with the carriages of the nobles and wealthy people of Vienna; in former days the equipages, though somewhat barbaric in loose trappings, brass bells, immense buckles, and gaudy fringes, were exceedingly picturesque. Much of this has now given way to an imitation of our English style, which aims at an extreme quietness in the carriages, the liveries, the harness, &c. Concealed by a belt of trees, but not far from the entrance to the park, is held a constant fair, for the amusement of the lower classes. Punchinello, swings and threatres succeed

each other in endless variety, and it is most amusing to observe the interest which they create, especially in the wild people who visit the capital from the Carpathian mountains, and other distant portions of this far-spreading empire.

CHAPTER V.

THE CAMP OF BRUCK.

On the afternoon of Sunday the 18th June, accompanied by our friend Count Hellwald, we visited the camp at Bruck, situated about twenty miles from Vienna.

By some error in the notice which the Minister at War had sent of our intended arrival, the day was mistaken, and General Prevadowich, commanding the camp at Bruck, was absent in Vienna; but we were received with every kindness and attention by his staff officers.

I cannot say that I concur in the general arrangements of this camp. It consists of a considerable number of very large wooden huts, or rather barracks, situated very close together—indeed, in my opinion, most dangerously close, since should one catch fire, I see no possibility of escape for all those standing to leeward of it. Here all the recognized laws in building wooden towns and cities in Russia and America are entirely set at defiance, and I cannot believe but that the camp must, ere very long, be destroyed. Each of these buildings is occupied by 200 soldiers, each soldier having a comfortable bed or palliasse stuffed with straw and placed upon a sort of low table of wood. The disadvantage, however, of this is, that these bedsteads almost entirely fill the room, and no space is left for the men to move about, or

even to eat their meals, which, in wet weather, must be especially inconvenient. The position of the hospital buildings I considered very objectionable, situated as they are in the midst of the lines of the soldiers on duty. Each room contained about fifty patients, without much ability to separate the different diseases. Many of the ambulance carriages were very clever, and possessed great merit.

For the musketry instruction of the army the arrangements appear very good, and upon some points highly deserving of imitation; but the distances at which they are instructed to fire would be considered with us to be very limited. One part of the instruction which is adopted is of great value, as it tests the intelligence of the soldier in a remarkable degree. At a distance of about 200 yards from the firing shed a trench is dug, of about 10 or 12 feet deep and about 80 or 100 feet long; in this the target-holder walks up and down, the target being the figure of a soldier full size, and so arranged that when it is held up the feet should be even with the earth. This figure the target-holder raises up at uncertain places, and moves along the trench for a prescribed number of seconds, generally about ten; the marksman, therefore, as soon as he sees it, is compelled to take a quick, though steady aim. Firing thus at an unfixed mark is perhaps more valuable than any other kind of practice, as it most resembles the actual sharp-shooting practice in war. The running deer and hog are also in use, and the first-class shots are permitted to compete in this practice.

I also saw a small spade with a saw edge, which it was under consideration to issue to a certain number of the infantry, and which, in modern warfare, where so much must and will depend upon the cover which troops can quickly obtain from their enemy, may prove of great service. The advisability of its adoption

deserves consideration; for that army which can most rapidly create a breastwork, however slight, will possess an immense advantage over its opponent.

The same description of large wooden barracks, for I cannot call them huts, were also provided as stabling for the cavalry; and the system which I spoke of at the Rodolf Barracks, regarding the manure, was also practised here. The horses, although well bred, and in many instances very nice little animals, were here, again, in poor condition, owing, no doubt, to the half-ration system which, I presume, for economical reasons, was adopted.

On the whole, the camp at Bruck may be looked upon more in the light of an immense barrack of mixed troops than as a camp of instruction; but this is an evil from which we are not entirely free, either at Aldershot or the Curragh. It is one of the greatest mistakes which any military administration can commit, and is universally condemned by the combative branches; their voice is too frequently smothered for economical reasons, but *moveable* camps of instruction are now yearly formed in Great Britain. The sanitary arrangements at Bruck certainly appeared to be of an inferior order, and the water supply in the camp, so very requisite, especially in case of fire, appeared most restricted; for, although a river runs beneath, yet without more perfect appliances for bringing up the water, it might as well be miles distant. Avenues of acacia have been largely planted, which will, no doubt, in a few years give a pleasing appearance.

There was a large casino in the centre, on the officers' side, where two most excellent bands were in attendance, alternately performing. Non-commissioned officers and even soldiers appeared, equally with the officers, to be permitted to obtain refreshments at the tables. This in an army which has been

looked upon as so aristocratic as that of Austria, appeared a little singular. The officers were comfortably lodged, about twenty in one barrack, their servants in a large broad gallery in the centre; but here again the risk from fire appeared to me most imminent, more especially amongst such a smoking generation as these Germans are. I do not speak from want of experience on this subject, it having been my lot to have the command, for a period of five years, of a camp fitted for ten thousand men, where, with every appliance against fire, and with a well-arranged system for its instant extinction continually practised, yet occasionally we had the greatest difficulty to isolate it, and I feel convinced that had our camp been constructed after the model of Bruck, we should have been unable to do so.

The main guard at the camp was composed of Hungarian soldiers. These men are almost invariably handsome, well-formed men. They appeared well accoutred, but nearly all of them had in use the high-heeled boots to which I have before alluded. How they can be supposed to march in these boots I cannot imagine.

At nine in the evening, after a fair sort of dinner at the camp restaurant, we started on our return to Vienna, the train being greatly crowded.

It would be a positive wrong and injustice to quit the subject of Vienna without alluding to the extreme beauty of the women of all classes, which far surpasses that of any other city in the world that I have yet seen. This beauty is by no means confined to the upper classes of society, far from it. Enter tramways or theatres, attend garden meetings or music, walk on the boulevards or the Prater, it is the same thing; the beauty of the women strikes you at every point. It is accounted for by the great mixture of races in the citizens of Vienna, coming together as they do from all parts of central Europe. But whatever the cause,

the fact asserts itself, that the women of no city in the world can compare in beauty with those of Vienna.

At six o'clock on the morning of the 19th of June, we embarked on board a small steamer on the canal which led to the Danube; and from this vessel, after about one hour's steaming, we were transferred, with our baggage, to a tolerably comfortable steamboat of a much larger size, which was to take us to Pesth, the capital of Hungary. One serious inconvenience to which passengers are subjected in these vessels is the determination of the Germans who travel by them to shut all the windows, thereby excluding every current of air from the cabins; and, in addition to this, they then cloud themselves and all around them in a dense atmosphere of tobacco smoke, from which all escape is impossible. But not only is this habit exercised at all hours of the day, but even during meals there was no exemption from this disagreeable practice.

About mid-day we reached the famous fortress of Comorn, which prides itself upon the enviable fact of having never yet succumbed to an enemy, a boast which few other fortresses of equal magnitude in the world can make. Its outworks did not appear to realise those conditions of strength which are to be looked for in modern fortifications, although I understood that very considerable works had recently been added to it. The embrasures seemed intended for miniature artillery, and placed far too close together; the walls of the works also appeared not to be protected from mortar fire by earthworks, and some of their outworks seemed to have no defence on their land faces. However, my remarks must be considered as impressions formed on a very cursory view, from the deck of a steamer, and as Comorn has never yet fallen to an enemy, these impressions may not be justified by the reality.

The passengers on board this vessel were mostly in groups of

families, who were proceeding from the city of Vienna to their country places on the Danube, or the watering Spas lower down the river. They were especially polite to us English strangers, although generally I was surprised to remark that they were unacquainted with any foreign languages.

CHAPTER VI.

PESTH AND BASIASCH.

About five o'clock we reached the city of Pesth, on the left bank of the Danube, and Buda, or Ofen, on the right bank. The appearance of these cities is really magnificent, from the height and splendour of the new buildings, the more remarkable when it is borne in mind that little more than twenty years since these cities were almost entirely destroyed by a bombardment, which was continued without ceasing, the fire raining upon them from the upper forts for twenty-four hours, a calamity soon after succeeded by the heaviest floods within the memory of man, the Danube laying waste all the lower parts of these cities.

The improvements date from the grant of a separate Government and Parliament to the Hungarians, from which time a vast amount of English capital has flowed into this country, assisting in the development of its great natural resources. Splendid storehouses and immense hotels line the banks of the Pesth side of the river. The magnificent suspension-bridge is perhaps the largest in the world, allowing the ice to pass freely through at the breaking up of the winter, and so probably preventing all future inundations. A pair of monstrous lions, one on either side, command the entrance to the bridge. These were carved by an Italian artist, and it is said that soon after they were placed in their positions, it was pointed out to him that he

THE ANCIENT TURKISH BATH AT PESTH.

had omitted the tongues of these animals, which so distressed him that he threw himself into the Danube and was drowned.

On landing, we took up our quarters at the Hotel Hongria, a newly-erected very fine building, considerably larger and far more comfortable and economical than the Hôtel du Louvre at Paris.

The inhabitants of Pesth excel those of Vienna in their love of pleasure, making it, as far as their means will allow, the business of their life; and the laxity of morals in the capital of Hungary is proverbial even in Austria.

On the morning after our arrival we visited the palace and the chapel above Buda, admiring the view which was presented beneath. We then visited the ancient Roman sulphurous baths, to which additions have been made, but which are probably otherwise little changed since the days in which the victorious Roman soldiers luxuriated in them; indeed the large circular bath, now in daily use by the common people, is said to be in the exact state in which it was when used by them. In this bath bathers of both sexes were promiscuously mixed together, many of them labouring under most painful and ugly looking boils and various cutaneous affections, for which these waters are said to be most efficacious. Scantily robed in ragged clothing, these poor people are allowed from morning till evening to enjoy, without charge, the luxury of these naturally tepid waters, which give a singular balm and solace to their sufferings. The cures which are effected are said to be both astonishing and rapid. Attached to this are other baths, of a luxurious description, and entirely of modern construction, fitted up with every conceivable douche which can be applied to human ailment. These waters are renowned as being very efficacious for gout and rheumatism.

In a few years Pesth will probably become one of the largest cities in Europe; it has every condition of position, of mineral

and vegetable production within its command which should give it a considerable trade; and the intelligence of its inhabitants, together with their present freedom of institutions, and their own Parliament, bids fair to ensure its success.

On the morning of Thursday, the 22nd, we left Pesth by the railway for Temesvar. We here travelled second class, and found the carriages to be fitted up with spring cushions covered with green leather, and many new improvements seldom observable in the first-class carriages in England.

A great deal of rain fell, and a large portion of this flat country was under water. The agricultural wealth of Hungary would appear enormous. As far as the eye could reach over this boundless plain, as for hours and hours we travelled on, we could see crops of grain, Indian corn, wheat, rye, and barley, with occasional interruptions by patches of red chilies and a few vineyards. Enormous sheds were erected at the railway stations to shelter this produce when in course of transmission to the markets of the world. Many flocks of geese were feeding near the villages, and great numbers of sheep, cattle, and horses were grazing upon such lands as were not adapted for cereal productions.

We stayed a short time at Szegedin for dinner, and reached Temesvar at 5 P.M. Temesvar resembles very closely an American town, the same kind of wide, unfinished streets, with the same rough strides towards prosperity. A tramway was already in use through the principal roads in the town, and preparations going on for its entire completion. A very considerable river, which flowed through the town, opened communication with the Danube. Out of it we saw taken some fine sturgeon, weighing at least twenty pounds each, as well as large carp and pike.

There was nothing of interest to detain us at Temesvar, and late in the evening we proceeded on to Basiasch—the termination

of the railway—situated on the left bank of the Danube, between Belgrade, the capital of Servia, and Orsova, the last town in the dominions of Austria.

We reached Basiasch very early on the morning of the 23rd. On descending from the train we were seized upon by very wild Servians in most picturesque dresses. They had small black hats, with the edges turned up and plumes in front, ornamented shirts, loose white trousers, coloured cloth bound round their legs, and sandals fitted with thongs of leather; broad and richly-worked leather stays, strapped round their bodies, completed their dress. Most fortunately the interpreter of the Railway and Steamboat Company, Mr. Sterne, a most intelligent Austrian, came to our assistance, and we soon found very comfortable quarters in the Railway Hotel. Mr. Sterne gave us very considerable information regarding the country, and although he had been neither in Italy nor in England, yet he spoke both Italian and English remarkably well, in addition to German, Hungarian, Servian, Wallachian, Spanish, and French.

Being detained at Basiasch waiting for a steamer to proceed down the river, we employed the day in sketching, in writing letters, and admiring the picturesque dresses of the inhabitants. Late in the afternoon a steamer from Galatz arrived, bringing a large number of passengers from Constantinople and the lower parts of the Danube, who were generally proceeding to the baths and watering-places of Germany. The services of Mr. Sterne, the interpreter, were now called into active operation, especially to tranquillise a boisterous American, who, possessing no other money than English bank notes, became perfectly furious on being obliged to change one into the one-and-eightpenny small notes current in Austria, and this at a discount to his disadvantage of about twenty per cent.

Travellers are often recommended to carry English bank notes

to the Continent, as being more portable than gold, and equally convertible. This may be sound advice, as far as Western Europe is concerned, or even in the largest cities in the East; but in small towns great difficulty, as well as loss, will be met with in exchanging them, because they are not understood nor easily recognised as genuine, and the five-pound English note being seventy times as valuable as the one-guilder Austrian note, creates much surprise and mistrust in those to whom they are offered.

We were agreeably surprised by the cleanliness of our rooms and beds, which at first looked suspicious, from the fact of its being the first time that we found the upper sheet tacked to the quilt, which we afterwards found was usual in Hungary and eastward, especially in small hotels. At the small hotels in Hungary, the living is generally very fair, and the charges reasonable. This is due to the fact that the price of meat averages not more than threepence a pound; bread is equally reasonable; and very good wine can be procured at from threepence to sixpence per bottle.

In conversation with some of the intelligent people I met at Basiasch, they gave great credit to the English, as being the first to develop the resources of Hungary. The productive mines of coal were first opened out at the instigation of the English, and with their capital, doubtless with the view of obtaining a large interest for the investment; but it has resulted in immense benefits to both parties. The engineers on the steamboats and railways were at first all English. Now, however, that the natives have been instructed by them, this well paid service has very naturally been placed in their hands. It is quite evident that large returns can be obtained for capital judiciously laid out in Hungary, whether it be in Pesth itself (which cannot fail in a few years to become a magnificent and enormous city)

or in the country, where the industry in mines, in vineyards, and in agricultural products is receiving every day greater development.

In the evening, at Basiasch, a few fire-flies displayed their tiny lights; the first that I had seen in these latitudes, reminding us that we were approaching the sunny south.

CHAPTER VII.

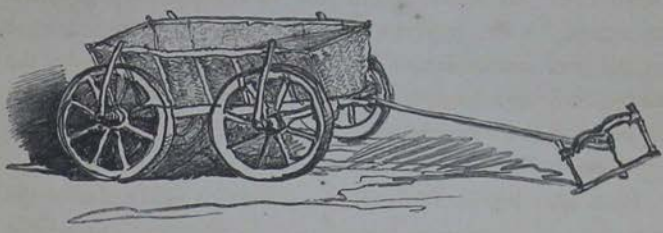
ON THE DANUBE.

On the morning of the 24th we left Basiasch, embarking in a very fine steamer for Orsova. The boats on the lower part of the Danube, although not equal to those on the Hudson and other large rivers in America, are yet very capacious and well-appointed. I am, however, bound to add that, in consequence of the river communication being a government monopoly, the charges are exceedingly high. The captain and officers, as well as many of the stewards, are Austrians or Italians, coming principally from the island of Lissa and the coast of Dalmatia.

Soon after leaving Basiasch, the scenery on either side of the river became most lovely, increasing in grandeur until we arrived within half an hour of Orsova. Here the Danube forces its way through the lower spurs of the Carpathian mountains, which at this point are still of considerable altitude; while the channel being narrowed at this gorge, the stream rushes against the rocks, scarped on either side in the form of precipitous walls; high above, the mountains are clothed to their summit with evergreens, the whole forming a scene so wonderfully beautiful and varied, that it requires to be seen in order to be realised. Strictly speaking, the iron gates of the Danube are the rapids made by the shallow water and dangerous rocks, which occur soon after leaving Orsova; but the term would seem to be more

applicable to the deep cleft in the mountains formed by some convulsion of nature or the action of the Danube.

Doubtless the present flat land of Hungary was once the bed of a great lake, dammed up by the Carpathian mountains, until by some great convulsion of nature the water burst through them. The Banat of Hungary possesses a soil perhaps unequalled in the world; and now that improved cultivation is yearly on the increase, assisted by steam-ploughs, threshing-machines, and other agricultural implements largely imported from England, it is impossible to calculate the amount of corn which ere long will be produced in this favoured region, and which through



ROUGH COUNTRY CART, ORSOVA.

the ever-increasing facilities afforded by the new lines of rail, will be readily transported to the large commercial cities in the west of Europe, yielding very handsome returns for the outlay made in this agricultural industry.

The works of Trajan are quite evident on the Servian side of the river. A road still exists, in many parts cut out of the solid rock, and where this was rendered impossible by the precipitous character of the mountain, there are yet visible the traces of the holes which were pierced in the rock for the beams upon which

to rest the stages carrying the road. Just the same method is now resorted to on the faces of the giant mountains in the Himalayas.

About 5 P.M. we arrived at Orsova, putting up at a very comfortable hotel called the King of Hungary. Orsova is most romantically situated on the Danube, the Servian mountains ranging along the opposite bank, while the river itself is banked by a beautiful range of hills covered with timber.

The regularity with which the town is built, indicates its original character as a military settlement—a frontier post to guard against attacks from the Turks. So late as 1854 it was occupied by a Russian force, thus invading the neutrality of Austria; but the Turks, who own a small fortified island called New Orsova, a short distance below the town, drove this Russian force away. This island still contains a Turkish garrison, and possesses an armament of old-fashioned guns capable of firing salutes; but so far from being able to resist an attack from the implements used in modern warfare, the appearance of its fortifications and defences would indicate that they would crumble to pieces in a few hours under a well-conducted bombardment.

The inhabitants of this part of Hungary wear very singular dresses. The men are clothed in thick sheepskins, worn with the wool outside, sheepskin caps, linen trousers, woollen leggings, and sandals. The women wear a bright red handkerchief on their heads, a handsome embroidered jacket, with black or red morocco boots. They also carry a most curious belt round their body, made of coloured cloth, from which, thickly massed together and reaching to their ankles, are coloured strings or fringes, principally red. These give them a singular, but especially at a short distance, a very pleasing appearance. It cannot be said that either men or women of this country are handsome

but in dress they are very picturesque. The common inhabitants appear very musical, scarcely one but is able to play on some instrument.

There was a large colony of Roumalis or gipsies encamped towards the western part of the town. They were wild in dress and manner. It is said that they had come from the distant plains of Hindostan, and that they still retain some knowledge of the language. I endeavoured to prove this by addressing them in Hindostanee, but the only word they seemed to understand was "Auret," or woman. They appeared generally very humble and dejected. On the following day we passed a band of them encamped by the roadside, inhabiting blackened and tattered tents, the children until about ten years of age being perfectly naked.

On Sunday the 25th of June we drove over to the baths of Mehadia, a distance of about ten miles from Orsova. The road led by the side of a running stream of water through gorges in the hills, clothed to their summits with bright foliage. About half-way we passed the remains of an aqueduct, very solidly built, but now in ruins, which is said to be of Turkish origin. Mulberry trees and cherry trees lined the road on either side. These apparently were considered to have no owners, every one being free to take what fruit he desired. The cherries were now ripe, and men and boys were gathering them to sell almost for a song in the neighbouring towns.

At Mehadia there is a very handsome bathing establishment; the houses built and furnished with much luxury, the gardens beautifully laid out; but it was an unhappy sight to see the invalids of all ages and both sexes who so numerously attended the springs. The character, however, which these waters bear for curing pulmonary complaints, as well as cutaneous disorders, stands so high that they are resorted to from far and near.

The dresses which we met with were most interesting and

particularly gay, every Eastern as well as Frank nationality being here represented.

TURKISH AQUEDUCT NEAR MEHADIA.

A large number of well-dressed ladies dined at the restaurant. I do not see why I should criticise the dexterity with which they ate peas with their knives, or held their forks over-handed like a pen. We choose to look upon these as vulgarisms, but if this be the habit of the principal inhabitants of any country, we certainly have no right to set up laws for their guidance in such particulars.

Before quitting Hungary, I may briefly allude to an industry which is making much progress in the country, and is receiving great attention and encouragement in London—the production of Hungarian wine. The improvement is owing to the plants being cultivated with more knowledge and care, and the wine being more carefully prepared. This I believe is principally due to the influx of clever Germans with capital, who have set about planting and improving the vineyards after the manner of those near the Rhine; and as the soil and climate are in no way inferior, while the value of the land and the price of labour are considerably less, there is a fair prospect of a large remuneration. The Hungarian wine generally more resembles Burgundy than Bordeaux, and is of great strength. There are some very rich white wines, but these are seldom exported, as they are said not to bear the carriage.

CHAPTER VIII.

DOWN THE DANUBE TO KALAFAT.

THE morning of Monday the 26th of June was quite lovely; the view from my window embraced the Carpathian mountains with the noble Danube in the foreground. Fishermen were landing large carp, about seven pounds in weight, which were sold for sixpence apiece. Gaily-dressed peasants were coming into the town in crowds, carrying baskets of mountain strawberries, fruits, and other country produce.

Having determined to continue our journey down the Danube, we secured places on board a steamer called the Marshal Radetsky, for Rustchuk.

The passengers on board were very interesting: Turks with their ladies in national costume; Servians in their handsome brown dress, their belts stuck full of arms; Wallachian officers; Greek priests with their wives and families; Armenians; in fact every nation of the east of Europe appeared to be represented. It was interesting to observe the strides which the Servian youths who were on board were making towards the customs of the West. They had not yet entirely divested themselves of the fez, but had so far modified it as to place a gold band round the red cap, and occasionally a black peak in front of it.

The boat in which we now found ourselves was not one of the express boats, which run only twice a week and stop at few places.

Our boat stopped at every town on the Danube, whether Servian or Wallachian, and went much slower. The table was not nearly so well supplied, and the sleeping berths were inferior. We, however, gained the advantage of seeing more of the country, and the charges scarcely exceeded one half of the express.

In England a gentleman is considered a very fair colloquial linguist if he can speak three or even two languages, in addition to his own, with tolerable fluency, but in the east of Europe almost every one above the rank of a common peasant is able to converse fluently in at least three languages; and it is of constant occurrence to meet men who can speak seven or eight, with three or four dialects of each of these in addition. These languages generally embrace Turkish, Greek, Russian, French, Italian, German, Spanish, and sometimes English, and frequently in addition Servian, Bulgarian, or Wallachian.

The gentleman whom I was accustomed to sit next to at dinner spoke seven languages, and all apparently with equal facility. I had now, to my great satisfaction, no considerable difficulty in conversing with a large number of my fellow travellers, from which I had up to this point unfortunately been precluded by my ignorance of the German language.

It would be bold in me to advocate as a general rule the study in England of modern languages, in opposition to that of the classical literature of the ancients; but as a practical man, I cannot be blind to the fact of the positive advantages that would accrue from a more general study of the former. When a man is cast upon his own resources in the world at large, it is most desirable that he should be able to meet his fellow men in foreign countries on an equal footing in this respect.

At twenty miles below Orsova we passed the lower rapids of the Danube, or what are called the lower iron gates; the water, however, not being very low there was not much to distinguish

them from the other parts of the river. On either bank we observed various remains of Roman architecture, ancient forts, to dispute or defend the passage of the river; and the buttresses of a bridge, said to have been built by Trajan, are occasionally to be seen when the water is sufficiently low.

At about 2 P.M. we reached Torno Severino, where commerce of all kinds, but especially agricultural industry, appeared to be making most rapid strides. The town presented many large buildings recently erected, and it was satisfactory to observe in the neighbourhood of the jetty an immense collection of agricultural implements of English manufacture. There were at least thirty large steam threshing machines, ploughs, etc., etc., over which a Wallachian sentry was keeping guard.

A traveller from the West on board these vessels must be struck by the systematic idleness of most of the passengers. There is but one industry which they carry on with unceasing activity, and that is smoking; but besides this, and an occasional game of cards, nothing is done beyond conversation. Not a book of any kind whatever did I see in the hands of a single passenger during the entire voyage of two days from Orsova to Rustchuk.

My son employed himself in sketching many of these singular groups, and it was curious to observe the different way in which his amusement was regarded by them. The vanity of some was conspicuous in a desire that he should delineate them with all their grandeur, while the cleverness of the old Turkish ladies was evidenced in their endeavour to prevent the evil eye of the Giaour from falling upon their children.

In the afternoon the weather became more stifling and sultry, with an overcast sky, portending a storm. These are of constant occurrence on the Danube, but to strangers they assume a terrible aspect. Suddenly, and without warning, the wind rose to a

hurricane. The sand and dust from the shore darkened the air, the river became a sea of foam, and the surging of the waves was quite extraordinary, considering the width of the river, which was here not more than a quarter of a mile broad. The lightning played round the vessel, the thunder was terrific, the rain descended in floods; the small fishing-boats flew to the banks for shelter. Our awning was torn to pieces before it could be folded up, and the passengers, regardless of classes, rushed pell mell into the main cabin, instantly shut every window, and most of them began violently to smoke. Could any position be more disagreeable? The storm outside was infinitely preferable to this, and putting on my high boots and india rubber cloak, I took up a solitary position under the lee of the rudder-house, to witness the storm in all its glory. These storms of rain are of the utmost advantage to this dry, but naturally productive country. Followed by the heat of the sun, they cause a magical effect on the vegetation.

I was amused by an old Servian Jew, a passenger from Belgrade, who, in the few Spanish words he had at command, inquired zealously after the Jews in London, but his enquiries were more especially directed to their riches than to their faith, and when I told him they were rich, he added, inquiringly, Very rich? I said, yes, immensely rich; some of them possessed barrels and barrels full of gold. I never shall forget the pious way in which he looked up to Heaven, and from the very pit of his stomach he said, "Good, ah, very good! these Israelites are then very rich! To God be thanks!"

About six in the evening we reached Kalafat, in Roumania. This seemed a very rising place. New houses had been built, boulevards had been laid out, and a progress resembling that of an American town was everywhere apparent. Here again a large number of threshing machines and other agricultural instru-

ments by Snuttleworth, of Lincolnshire, were resting on the bank, awaiting transmission into the interior.

I here met a smart young Roumanian gentleman, who loudly expatiated upon the riches of his rising country, stating that they possessed lands as rich as the Banat of Hungary, and far more extensive, and that they now had excellent laws, which were pretty fairly administered. I hinted that possibly Russia might again covet so much fertility. "Ah! there indeed is the danger," he said; "but we look to you English, and not without reason, for see, when the other day the Russian said he would abrogate the Treaty of 1856, you English were the only nation that stood in the gap. No," said he, "we are Romans purer than those of Italy, and our language is purer still. We still retain the traces of Trajan's noble works in our country, and we will do honour to our race and parentage." These certainly are noble sentiments, and it now remains to be seen whether there is sufficient energy in the youthful state of Wallachia to carry them into execution.

Soon after leaving Kalafat on the northern bank, we reached Widdin on the southern. This was the first large Turkish city we had yet arrived at. It is strongly fortified, and is situated in a very commanding position on the river, the banks of which are low and flat. Numerous minarets rise up in all parts of the city, and it being just sunset, the cry of the Muezzin from their summits, inviting the faithful to prayer, faintly sounded in the distance. This, however, as we reached the landing place, was drowned in a babel of voices, all loudly vociferating in recommendation of their several wares.

Some were selling cherries and various other fruits, others tobacco, and others again Rahath-li-coom,—"the delight of my soul"—a very delicious sweetmeat, made, it is said, by the ladies in the Harems from rice and honey. There was also a fat Turk wielding an enormous cucumber over his head, and occasionally

stroking his beard with it, while he invited the true believers to test their digestion. The scene was exceedingly picturesque from the varied and brilliant dresses.

We continued our journey until nightfall, and then stopped for three hours, during the extreme darkness of the night. The heat of the cabin was excessive; at the same time the danger of sleeping near an open window was considerable, as the malaria of the Danube is notorious. In the month of June, however, the season is scarcely sufficiently advanced to render it very hazardous; but when the vegetation is rank and dead in the latter end of August and September, it is much to be dreaded.

CHAPTER IX.

TO BUCHAREST.

On the morning of the 27th June, on looking out of the cabin window, I found that we were passing large marshes on either side of the river; hundreds of gigantic pelicans waddled through the mud, raising their sack-like bills as we passed within fifty yards of them, while other water birds of various species were flying in flocks, or whistling round the sedgy pools. What a magnificent country this must be in October or November for the sportsman!

We next reached Nicopolis, a very picturesque Turkish city, for at this part of the Danube the Turks have the advantage in the banks of the stream being high, while on the opposite, or Roumanian side, the land is flat and marshy. Opposite to Nicopolis, and on the northern bank, was a wharf without houses; but still, on the bank, under charge of a sentry, there was a due complement of English agricultural machines.

The difference between the agricultural activity on the two sides—the Turkish and the Roumanian—was most striking. While the Turk is still sleeping, the young and recently emancipated country is seizing all the benefits of the natural advantages at its command. Smart carriages, with well bred horses, drive up to the yet unfinished wharfs, to convey the bustling passengers who leave and enter at every landing-place; while on the

Turkish side the ancient gilded and painted Araba, with a pair of oxen, patiently awaits the chance of a few solitary and silent merchants. The active habits of the people and the progressive government now enjoyed by these Sclave States on the banks of the Danube, have made, and are making, a wonderful change in this part of Europe.

We had a great change of passengers this morning, but I cannot say much in favour of the beauty of the Danubian ladies. We had left Vienna too lately, not to be very critical on this subject.

At about 11 A.M. we reached Rustchuk, which appears extensively fortified. Here some small commercial improvements appear to be in progress. The terminus of the Varna Railway is here erected, a building, however, of the humblest pretensions.

Discharging such of the passengers as desired to remain in Turkey, we immediately left for the opposite town of Giurgevo, where we landed about noon. Here everything was altered; and strange, indeed, it was, that the opposite sides of the river should present such a contrast, the one all activity and progress, the other remaining in a sleepy inactivity.

The Custom House officer, although allowing immense cases, the property of his friends, to pass without examination, rigidly enforced a strict examination of our small portmanteaus.

About five in the afternoon we reached Bucharest. We got upon the top of the omnibus to obtain a better view of the town as we entered it. On our way we were detained for a short time by a funeral party; the body lay on its bier, under a magnificent canopy, highly carved with the figures of angels, the top richly gilt and painted. The face was exposed, garlands of flowers surrounding it. The features were those of a man about the age of fifty-five, pensive and expressive.

After some delay we obtained rooms at Fieschi's Hotel, in the Strada Sanata. The parliament being in session, the city was so crowded by the delegates from the provinces, and others who had parliamentary business, that we were deemed fortunate in obtaining accommodation at any of the hotels in the town.

CHAPTER X.

BUCHAREST.

BUCHAREST, who can describe it? It embodies all the incongruities of the old and the new world; its inhabitants delight to call it the Paris of the East, and expatiate upon its many points of resemblance to its Western Sister. The city is said to cover an equal number of square miles of ground; and, certainly, the distances from various points are very great. It is composed of a heterogeneous mass of hurriedly constructed habitations, every sort of strange room heaped one on the other, as convenience dictated and in defiance of all rules of architecture: American shanties interspersed with plaster palaces and log cabins in confusion with buildings begun, half-finished, and relinquished. Every building in the city is covered with tin, as a protection against fire; a few of these roofs were painted red or green, but generally they were bright. Most of the streets remained unpaved. The shops were overcrowded with the refuse of Birmingham and Paris, which the owners highly extolled, and endeavoured to dispose of at the most exaggerated prices.

The city is said to contain 180,000 inhabitants, and it remains to be seen whether its new institutions and government, modelled on the Parisian form, will bring it to a state of prosperity, and whether it will bear the strain which democracy and republicanism are likely to put upon it.

These were our first impressions on visiting the city of Bucharest, but I desire so far to modify them, as to say that upon a closer and less hurried examination we found that very considerable improvements were in course of progress near the new Opera House, in the centre of the city. There the streets are being paved with granite from Aberdeen, some monster hotels are being constructed on the newest principles, boulevards are being laid out in the widest of the streets, and handsome buildings erected for academical and similar purposes.

One of our first duties was to pay our respects to Mr. Green, the Consul-General, by whom we were most kindly and hospitably received, and who personally presented us to the Minister-at-War, the Commander-in-Chief, General Floresco, the Maréchal du Palais, and other gentlemen of distinction. We also formed the acquaintance of Mr. Slade, the nephew of the late Turkish High Admiral, who was most attentive and kind to us.

In the afternoon we drove to the Champs Elysées of Bucharest. On our way we passed through a better part of the city, where the shops were somewhat improved; yet they appeared to have but little in them—as in one, nothing was sold but foxes' tails, and what they could do with such a number I could not imagine. In this part of the town, many new shops and hotels are in course of erection. The money at Bucharest is most annoying; nothing but an arbitrary nominal coinage exists, called Bucharest piasters, into which all the money of the neighbouring countries must be *nominally* changed, causing at each purchase the utmost perplexity and inconvenience to strangers.

We hired one of the carriages in the Square, a pretty Victoria, well horsed, and at a very reasonable price; although hired by the hour, this acts by no means as in other countries, where hiring by the time insures a crawling pace: here, on the contrary, it would seem as if they determined to try and see

what was the utmost distance they could accomplish in the hour.

A curious custom also exists of never informing the coachman where you desire him to go, and the drivers, in consequence, neither know nor have occasion to learn the name of a single street. The instant you step into the Victoria—the usual carriage of the country—the driver sets off at a furious pace, pulling at his horses, who, like the American, go all the faster in consequence: you must then intimate to him where you wish to go, by giving him, from time to time, at each turning in the road, a light touch on either shoulder with your cane. A stranger who is unacquainted with this habit, and equally so with the city itself, by neglecting this will ere long find himself whirled along, he knows not whither; and the coachman himself will be equally surprised at receiving no directions as to his route, until he has got far out of the city.

At the Chaussée, in Bucharest, on the summer evening, most of the fashion of the city appear; many of the carriages are handsomely turned out, with very well-bred horses; some are profusely caparisoned with highly-decorated harness, while in others, every art was resorted to, to see how little harness it was possible to put on—occasionally consisting of no more than a bridle, a pair of traces, and reins. The pace at which all the coachmen drive is most remarkable—it appeared a point of honour with every one never to go less than twelve miles an hour.

We finished our tour at Hughes' Hotel—here pronounced Huicks, said to be the best restaurant in the city; we, however, were not fortunate, for we had a very poor and a very expensive dinner; and on the following morning our breakfast was worse and dearer still. The gentlemen of Bucharest are slaves to what is considered fashionable; and, although it seems to be universally allowed that Mr. Hughes' restaurant is extortionate and very

indifferent, yet, as fashion commands, they dare not go elsewhere. Mr. Hughes came, some years since, to Bucharest from Paris, as cook to a wealthy Boyard, and so successful has he been that he now is said to possess a fine property in France, and is worth, they say, fifty thousand pounds sterling.

The constant alterations in the climate at Bucharest are most remarkable and dangerous. At 1 P.M. the thermometer in my room, which looked northward, was 81 degrees of Fahrenheit, and by 5 P.M. it had fallen to 50—a difference of 31 degrees in four hours: the night became cold, and the following morning, though it was in the month of June, was like an English autumn: by one next day it had again risen to 76. Possibly the climate may be affected by the Carpathian mountains, which, in a direct line, are not more than sixty or seventy miles from the city.

On Wednesday morning, the 28th of June, we walked to the Tcheissmay-ju Gardens: these are prettily laid out, and in the very centre of the city, and contain an area about equal to that of St. James's Park.

We also, later in the day, visited the Parliament House, but, in consequence of the sitting on that day being voted secret, we could not enter the Chamber itself. In the ante-room, however, the Consul-General presented us to General Floresco, the Minister-at-War, and some other persons of distinction, who took the trouble to come out of the Chamber to receive us, when they were told that we were there. The view from the old Monastery, in which from long usage the Parliament sits, is very beautiful, and shows the great extent of the city of Bucharest.

On the morning of the 29th June, General Floresco called personally at our hotel, at 7 A.M., and conducted us in his own carriage to the exercising ground, at the edge of the city, a very extensive plain, and well adapted to this purpose. Here we were provided with horses, and rode to meet the troops—a brigade

which had been directed to parade in order that I might see a sample of the army of Roumania.

This brigade consisted of a battery of Field Artillery, two regiments of Cavalry, and three regiments of Infantry, one of Chasseurs, one of the Line, and one of Engineers. The term of enlistment is only for three years, consequently they were composed of very young soldiers, averaging, I was assured, not more than a year and a half in the service. They performed a few drill manœuvres, which they executed exceedingly well, the Artillery especially; indeed it was surprising to see how much they had acquired in the limited time which they had had for instruction. The soldiers of the Cavalry seemed to ride with firm seats, but this is not surprising, as the natives of these plains, like the Hungarians, may be said to be born in the saddle. The words of the officers were given in a firm tone of voice, and the Infantry officers rode very well. At the termination of the review the troops marched past.

The whole parade was very creditable indeed. The next and most vital question to be solved is—how this army will conduct itself in the field and before the enemy. Hitherto it has not gained many laurels; but when it is considered how few years have passed since this nation was in a state of the most abject slavery to the Turk, it is not surprising if they yet require some years of freedom to give them energy and confidence.

I make these remarks because the want of bravery of the Roumanian troops has been commented upon pretty freely. It is said that on the occasion of the last outbreak in Bulgaria much sympathy was shown for the movement in Roumania, and that the Turks threatened to cross the Danube. On hearing this the whole force then in Giurgevo vanished—the officers setting the example by first leaving their men, and the men following to the capital. It cannot be expected that a nation ground down by a

tyrannous rule for years can at once redeem themselves from the failings which oppression produces, and, probably, until they have, in conjunction with some well-tried nation, had experience in war, they will not, in reality, display such Roman virtues as they now possess by name.

After the parade we visited the Arsenal, which may be said to be in a state of formation. The machinery had been imported from Liege. There were five or six batteries of brass twelve-pounder guns made in France, and some mitrailleuses. The officer in charge appeared very intelligent, and most interested in his duties.

At 3 P.M. we were presented at the Palace to T.R.H. the Crown Prince and Princess of Bucharest. The Crown Prince was very kind and pleasant, and I hope he may prove equal to the intrigues of a large portion of the community which he has to govern. He cannot be considered to rest on a bed of roses, but the great success of the Germans may go far to assure his position. Supported, as he naturally would be, by the great influence of the Germanic Empire, his own subjects, as well as foreign governments, will be very cautious how they endeavour either by intrigue or by violence to displace him. His mild manners, however, are scarcely suited to the rough race over which destiny has called him to rule. The Princess is possessed of the most charming manner, in which she greatly resembles the Princess of Wales. She is exceedingly handsome, and speaks English fluently.

In the evening we accepted an invitation from Mons. Ottotellachanos to a large party or fête, which he was to give to the Crown Prince, at his country seat, called Mozarilla, about nine miles from Bucharest. I had the advantage of being taken there by Sir Robert Dalzell, her Majesty's Consul at Rustchuk, who, from his long and perfect knowledge of the East, entertained me very much by his anecdotes on Eastern subjects.

We arrived at Mozarilla about 9 P.M., driving through the grounds to a very extensive château. The grounds were laid out in the English style, by a gardener who was of great repute in Bucharest, and who had laid out the park above spoken of, in the city at the Tcheiss-may-ju. The gardens were tastefully illuminated, and fireworks were added to the entertainment. The Prince embarked in a sort of flat-bottomed canoe, the better to witness their effect upon the water. He was accompanied by a very handsome lady, attached to the Court; the boat being managed by one of his staff, who, however, from being totally unskilled in the art of rowing, very nearly finished the dynasty, the Prince and his party escaping by a miracle from being upset into the deepest part of the lake.

The entertainment was concluded by cards, dancing, and supper. Only married ladies were present, it not being considered *en règle* that the unmarried should be present at any parties or balls, except the few full-dress balls which take place during the winter in the capital.

It is very difficult for a stranger to dive deeply into the truth as to the morals of any community: on a slight acquaintance he is apt either, on the one hand, to entertain too high an opinion of them, or, on the other, from some gossiping anecdotes which may be related to him, to condemn the whole society *en masse*. In every society scandal has a long tongue, and there are open ears at all times to receive it. The customs of Bucharest may be deeply belied; but report says that a strict attention to the marriage vow is rather the exception than the rule.

Although beauty in Bucharest cannot be said to equal that of Vienna, yet good looks are very general, and to these is added the charm of most pleasing and captivating manners.

It is allowable by law that a decree of divorce may be obtained three times during life, an example of which has already been

given by a certain princess, moving in the highest society. When reminded that no further chances would be open to her, she answered, "I beg your pardon; my first marriage was with my cousin, and consequently was illegal, and does not count at all; and thus one more opportunity is yet open to me."

Amongst the lower classes great irregularities in this respect are said to exist; but it must be borne in mind that but one generation since, the whole community were in a state of serfdom and slavery, and it can scarcely be expected that an entire regeneration of morals should immediately take place. Paris has been professed as their model, and it is to be seen what will be the result to this community, in its government and morals, of the example thus adopted.

Duelling in Bucharest is by no means uncommon. There is a story of a Jewish gentleman, peaceable in his disposition, but who was challenged to fight three young Roumanian gentlemen in succession. The challenged party has the right of priority of firing. The Jew, most unwillingly, went to the meeting; but, when there, determined to do the best he could. At the first shot he hit his opponent exactly on the third button of his coat, upon which he had steadily kept his eye, and killed him on the spot. He then did exactly the same with his second opponent; when the third, seeing what had befallen his predecessors, said he thought there must be some mistake in all the circumstances of the quarrel, and begged that differences might be adjusted in an amicable manner.

The subject of railway communication was creating the greatest interest in this country. It appeared that, by some unwise and unfortunate concessions which had been made, a loss to the country of many millions must result, and it was thought best to put up with this loss, rather than repudiate any of their engagements, even although they may have been entered into under a

fraudulent arrangement, for it is said that bribes and counter-bribes are by no means uncommon, even between the highest functionaries in the State.

Until lately great dissatisfaction existed throughout all Roumania in regard to the tenure of land. The Boyards claimed the entire right of the soil. Had this been insisted on, a revolution must have occurred. The matter was adjusted by an arrangement that after ten years one-fourth of the land should be in fee simple the actual property of the occupier. This at first much alarmed the owners, and they thought they should be ruined, as they felt that the one-fourth would alone be cultivated, and no labour would be obtainable to cultivate the remainder. The result, however, differed widely from their anticipations; for the tenants now, finding that they had a personal interest in the soil, not only laboured zealously on their own allotments, but, in addition, hired the portions which the landlords had retained, and thus both parties have benefited—a result which, it may be hoped, will be produced by our recent legislation in Ireland.

The education of the upper classes is now much attended to. Colleges are being erected for the young men, many of whom have hitherto been compelled to receive their education in Western Europe, which is said to engender a distaste for their native country on their return home.

As far as accomplishments go, the ladies also receive great attention. In the wealthy families it is the habit to engage French, Italian, and sometimes English governesses and servants, and thus a large amount of colloquial knowledge in languages is secured; and, as they are naturally very quick and apt pupils, the rapidity with which they acquire it, is quite astonishing. The geographical position of the country, moreover, renders a knowledge of languages almost obligatory, and thus a Roumanian who has the slightest pretension to a position above that of a peasant

can always speak at least two languages besides his own; and in consequence of the Parisian model which they have adopted, one of these is generally French; and the other, from the influence of religious sentiment, is generally Greek.

In character the Wallachians more resemble the Greeks than any other nation. Like them, they are very quick and clever, and somewhat cunning, and are accused of being not wanting in deception. Like them, they have been for generations slaves to the Mussulman; and it must take many years to produce in them that freedom of mind which is scarcely to be found in any country which has not, for generations, had the responsibility of self-government.

CHAPTER XI.

SCHUMLA.

On the morning of Friday, the 30th June, leaving Bucharest by rail, we arrived at Giurgevo about 10.30 A.M., had a bad and dear breakfast at the Bella Vista Hotel, and then crossed over by a small Turkish steamer to Rustchuk.

The bank on the Turkish side of the Danube dominates considerably the other shore, and a project is in contemplation of connecting the two by a monster bridge on so high a level as to allow the largest vessels that navigate the Danube to sail freely under. This is not likely to be realised for many years, as the expense would be enormous, with no chance of a fair return for the outlay.

Bucharest is never likely to become the great high road to India. Vienna, Pesth, and Belgrade will, ere many years are passed, very probably be so; for when the rail is finished through Belgrade and Adrianople direct to Constantinople, it will give an impetus to the proposed line across Turkey in Asia by Aleppo and Bagdad; and should this be carried out, and the connecting link be added from Constantinople to Aleppo, then this direct land route will be made use of by every one proceeding to the East Indies. By that time, there is no doubt, the line from Kurrachee to Mooltan will be completed, giving access to the Punjaub and the northern portion of India; and probably another

line from Kurrachee through Kattiwar to join the central Indian line, thereby giving speedy access to Calcutta. The only sea voyage which will then have to be performed will be on the Persian Gulf.

In years to come, and when civilisation has made more rapid strides in Persia and Affghanistan, possibly the road to India will be entirely by land—that is, through Southern Russia to Rostow, Stravrapol, Derbent, Bakou, and by the southern shore of the Caspian, into Affghanistan, Cabul, and Lahore—but from present appearances, many years must elapse ere we can look for so great a change in the wild inhabitants who frequent this line, as to render the idea practicable.

The Turkish town of Rustchuk is very interesting—especially on a first inspection. The pipe-makers are exceedingly expert, and are renowned for making those beautiful black bowls for the pipes, inlaid with silver. One old Turk working a sewing machine amused us much.

Sir Robert Dalzell, the British consul here, gave us letters of introduction to Schumla, which were of the utmost service. Friday being the Turkish Sabbath, I could not be received by the Pasha of Rustchuk. This I regretted, as he is reported to be most intelligent, and a man of progress. The greatest attention was shown to us by Mr. Russell, a civil engineer connected with the Varna Railroad, a nephew, I believe, of Dr. W. Russell.

On Saturday morning, the 1st of July, we started by rail for Schumla. This line is in bad repute here, being looked upon as a job, by which, it is asserted, certain English engineers made large sums of money, and then sold it to a Belgian company. It would seem to pay very badly, and to be by no means an enviable investment; and when the Belgrade line is completed it probably will have no traffic at all.

The scenery about Tchernavoda is very fine, and a much larger

area of land is now cultivated than when I passed over this country about thirty years previously.

We remained a few minutes for dinner at Shitan-jik, or "the Little Devil," and about 1 P.M. we reached the Schumla road station. Hiring a carriage we immediately proceeded to the town of Schumla. On our arrival, we were most kindly and hospitably received by Réshid Pasha—*i. e.*, General Strecher—who gave us rooms in his own house, and entertained us during our stay.

General Strecher is by birth a Prussian. In the war of 1855-6, seeing what he considered a good opening, he took service in the German branch of the Contingent which we then raised, and in which, had the war continued, he would certainly have distinguished himself. Unfortunately for him, peace was made, and being in the East, he considered that his best chance of preferment was to join the Turkish service; but, as he would not become a renegade to his religion, he has not been engaged actually as a combative officer, but his very valuable services have been employed in giving instruction to the artillery. For many years he was stationed at Erzeroum in Asia, but latterly a higher field has been opened to his exertions, and he has now the charge and the instruction of the scientific branches of the army at the large Camp of Schumla.

In the cool of the evening we drove to the Camp, and presented ourselves to His Excellency the Mushir Pasha, Abdul Kerim, Field Marshal in the Sultan's army. We were received with the highest consideration, pipes and coffee being handed to us in Oriental fashion, &c.

The Camp was not at the time very full of troops, but the force of infantry then on parade mustered about four thousand men, and these the Mushir Pasha directed to be formed into column by divisions and brigades and to march past—to give me, as he said, an opportunity of judging how greatly they had improved since

I had had the honour of commanding a division of about six thousand of them, some sixteen years previously.

RECEPTION BY MUSHIR PASHA AT SCHUMLA.

They are fine, strong, able-bodied men – not very well set up, according to our acceptation of the term—but possessing all the qualities requisite for a campaign. They kept well in lines by grand divisions, and I was much struck by the general improvement in dress, in figure, and in the movement of these troops since I had served with this army. But I regretted to see that in their marching they had adopted an exaggerated French swing of the arms. The distances between the companies were well preserved, as also between battalions, and the pace correctly sustained. The music, too, was altogether changed from that of the old tunes which we remembered on the heights of Sebastopol.

The men were well clothed in stout blue cloth jackets, vests,

and a sort of knickerbockers, gaiters, and blucher boots; and although the clothing was somewhat worn, yet I perceived no holes or tatters, and the boots were well laced up. The knapsack is of cow's hide, and the greatcoat is folded round it, after the Turkish fashion.

In marching-order the soldier would seem to be too heavily-laden; but this I believe to be the universal fault with every army, and I believe that the day will arrive when armies will be so organised that to every fighting-man will be allotted a mate, whose sole duty will be that of assisting him in the carriage of his food, his spare ammunition, &c.

I have dwelt perhaps too minutely on this subject; but I am well aware that there is felt a great interest at home as to whether the sick man is really so ill as not to be able to hold his own against the possible inroads of the Bear of the north; and the state of his army, therefore, must naturally be a point of primary consideration.

General Strecher spoke of the rations now served out to the troops as being very superior to what they were formerly, both in quality and in quantity, and said that the pay of the men was seldom in arrears to any considerable amount. As far as I could learn all the troops are enlisted by conscription, the term of service being six years—three in the active list and three in the reserve. Forty pounds is paid to the Government to find a substitute; but as the entire army is taken from the Turkish population alone, military service must press very heavily indeed upon them. An extra tax is levied upon Christians, Jews, and Armenians in lieu of military service.

The officers of the army are formed from two classes—from those non-commissioned officers who remain in the army after their compulsory term of service has expired, and from cadets brought from the Military College in Pera; but the advancement

of officers is generally considered to be conducted very much by favouritism. The pay of the lieutenants is very poor indeed. In addition to clothes and rations, they receive but little more than two pounds sterling per month, and as they are generally married men, this barely suffices to keep them above indigence.

Unfortunately while we were at Schumla the cavalry and the artillery were encamped in the different valleys near the Camp, for the purpose of refreshing the horses on the young grass, a custom very usual in the East at this season; we had thus no opportunity of seeing the whole together, or any manœuvres on a large scale.

After an interview with the Mushir Pasha we drove through the Camp, which was kept in a state of the most perfect neatness and cleanliness; and here again was a wonderful change for the better; the latrine system, however, appeared very faulty.

We next looked at some of the fortifications. The town of Schumla is situated in a ravine, between the projecting points of two high hills; below the town is a vast plain. At present the apex of one of these mountains is fortified, and four other works of no great consideration exist in the plain. The plan now about to be executed is to fortify the point of the other hill, and to increase the works on the plain by three new ones, and thus the camp will be fortified by nine distinct works. I confess that I do not understand the general object; if the camp at Schumla is held by a very considerable force, this army could move out and attack the advancing enemy; if it is held by a small one it would appear by no means difficult for a superior force first to possess itself of one outwork and then to take the rest in succession. The Turks seem to be of opinion that the whole is far from perfect; but they ask, what can be done without money? and properly to fortify this extended position would cost an immense sum.

The Turkish Government are now laying down a railroad at their own cost, from the Schumla road station to the Camp, which will, when finished, prove a great blessing to the peasantry of the country, as they will no longer be compelled to give up the use of their carts for the conveyance of the Government stores. But why, instead of an expensive railroad made for locomotives, did they not lay down a common tramway, which at one fourth part of the cost, would have answered all their requirements? I mentioned this afterwards to the Seraskier Pasha at Constantinople, but he answered that a railway had been decided upon, which eventually would lead through Adrianople to Constantinople, and that this was the commencement of it. This line, however, presents such immense natural difficulties, that it would never be chosen by a railway engineer.

The Turkish soldier still retains the habit of halting and facing his officer when he salutes, a source of continual detention. It is singular that this custom has not been altered.

At a very pleasant supper with General Strecher we were much interested by his account of his services at Erzeroum, and in the country which lies to the south of it, a large portion of which he had personally surveyed and mapped.

CHAPTER XII.

VARNA.

On the morning of the 2nd July we drove round Schumla, visiting first the Tartar quarters, which appeared more orderly and prosperous than those of the native Turks. I may mention that after the war in the Crimea about three hundred and fifty thousand Crim Tartars, who did not care to remain under Russian rule, either feeling themselves somewhat compromised or from religious scruples, were imported into Bulgaria or into the Dobruska. About one hundred and fifty thousand of these poor people died, some from sickness and many from starvation; but those that now remain in Schumla and Varna appear to be doing well, as they are more orderly and neat than the Turks.

About two hundred and fifty thousand Circassians have also come over, having quitted the Caucasus after the defeat and capture of Shamyl; but these wild people fared worse than the Tartars: they killed and ate the oxen which the Government gave them to till their fields, and they also consumed the seed, and then being in a starving state they asked for more. It was stated that nothing could exceed the scenes of horror from starvation among these wretched people; even worse than those in Ireland in 1846, or in Persia at the present time.

The country round Schumla is well cultivated, producing fine crops; but as the farmers will not use manure they are compelled

occasionally to rest the land by letting it lie fallow. Small hills of manure lie heaped near the artillery barracks, which the farmers were at liberty to take away, but such is the apathy or prejudice of this people, that they will not remove that which in western countries would be eagerly purchased.

On returning we met a Turkish funeral. The body was just being consigned to the earth. It was carried to the grave in a coffin, out of which it was then taken and laid in the cold earth in its burial clothes, the coffin being returned to be used again on a similar occasion. This custom I had previously observed among the Chinese.

On the 3rd July we bid adieu to General Strecher, and left Schumla. We soon passed swamps two or three miles broad. Nothing could be more easy than to drain this large area of land and render it fertile. But in Turkey nothing is done that requires energy or outlay. And why expect this to be done when a thousand more profitable speculations are neglected?

We passed again the well-remembered villages where our division had been stationed during the war: Pravedy, Devna, Alladin, etc., etc., etc. And now the unfortunate selection of these encamping grounds in close proximity to the marshes was more apparent than ever. Alas! how many British soldiers now rest here, the victims of fever, ague, and cholera.

How easy it would be to avoid such mistaken selections of ground by instituting an information department in our army. Placing an experienced officer at its head, all that would be required would be to invite information from every officer in Her Majesty's service who travelled, and as no nation travels more, and in that nation none so much as military men, such information would be most extensive. Carefully selecting, under a good system, every important point, a tabular framework could be laid down of everything likely to be useful to a General occupying

any part of the world; and he would thus be enabled to make choice of places for landing and camping, having regard to wells, forage for his cattle, sanatory posts, etc., etc. Such knowledge was entirely wanting to our army when we landed on the shores of Bulgaria, before invading the Crimea.

We arrived at Varna about 7 P.M., and were received by the Prussian Consul, who was acting for the British Consul; and we took up our quarters at the Hôtel d'Angleterre, a poor little place, with a sharp landlady, and in which we were made to smart in our persons by the insects, and in our purses by the charges.

Varna has but little altered since our occupation. The great fire, at which I remember to have seen Marshal St. Arnaud and Marshal Lord Raglan, has been the cause of some improvement in the town. The port is still without any breakwater or other harbour work. The sultry weather was here as before, but, thank God, the cholera was not. A Turkish bath was most refreshing after our journey. The bath building is smaller than that at Constantinople, but is quite as well conducted.

On the following morning a refreshing dip in the sea strengthened us for the heat of the day. A very nice bathing shed has been erected in a convenient position, not far outside the city walls, which is very much frequented, both by Turks and Greeks. The natives of the borders of the Black Sea are wonderful swimmers, and enjoy for hours a recreation so appropriate to this climate. The men who commonly bathe in the harbour have a curious habit of scraping themselves with pieces of rough bricks and tiles on coming out of the water, which, I have no doubt, is very healthy for the skin, acting in the same manner as the friction used in the Turkish baths.

We walked through the town in the morning, and saw Lord Raglan's house, the French barracks, and the Magazines,—which

were so nearly blown up in the great fire. In the evening we drove out in company with the Prussian Consul to his country garden, in which the vines and other fruits were most luxuriant. He told me that the quality of the grape was excellent, but that in consequence of there being no one near Varna acquainted with the art of making wine, nor any proper appliances for its manufacture, the wine was generally spoilt, and that, although he had used his best endeavours to form a sort of company, with some central building at which all the wine in the district might be properly made, under the superintendence of an experienced German, and with the proper implements; yet so backward was the spirit of enterprise, that he had failed to induce any one to join him. The price of French, German, and other well made wines in Constantinople is very considerable, and a large profit therefore, would appear quite certain, if such an undertaking were well carried out.

From what we saw at Varna, it would appear that Turkey had not changed very much, and certainly not enough to satisfy Europe. They have formed superior councils in Constantinople, delegated from all the provinces, and Christians are admitted to them; but practically they have no power, as in reality it is only a council of examination, whose opinion, when recorded, can be accepted or rejected by the Grand Vizier and the Sultan at pleasure. The law in the provinces is said to be in a very degraded position —the judges open to presents; and the very fact of possessing a new French code acts as a cloak by which they can at any time cover their judgments.

I enquired what generally were the feelings of the Bulgarian peasants towards Russia, and was told that they were very much changed, and that, subjected as they are to the will of the Turk, yet they feel convinced that under the Russians they would be more abject still, and with the disadvantage of

not being exempted from military conscription as they now are.

The lower classes in Bulgaria are very ignorant and uneducated. The middle and higher classes are very intelligent; many of them attend schools and colleges in Constantinople, and I was told that the Bulgarians are considered as the most apt of all the scholars.

Before leaving Varna, I made enquiries as to the price of meat and bread, and found there was but little difference between these and our home prices; for although immense quantities of corn are grown in the interior, there is scarcely any means of transport, and as there is no harbour or wharf in Varna to screen the shipping, all corn has to be landed in boats, and the carting nearly equals the cost of its freight to England. At Varna my son purchased some of the very finest Paris water-colour brushes, and for next to nothing. How they could have got there we were at a loss to imagine.

On the 5th July we started by the steamer for Constantinople. How different was the scene on the bay from that which presented itself at the time of my embarkation for the Crimea, in 1854. Now six or eight small vessels lay at anchor in the bay; then, in conjunction with the French, counting men-of-war and transports, we had eight hundred and fifty ships before the town. The labour and excitement of that embarkation can never be forgotten by any one who held a position of responsibility in it.

SCUTARI. THE TURKISH BARRACK, THE HOSPITAL, AND MONUMENT TO BRITISH SOLDIERS. P. 70.

CHAPTER XIII.

STEAMER TO CONSTANTINOPLE.

THE vessel in which we embarked for Constantinople was called the Maximilian. As yet there is no railroad through Bulgaria, and the Turks would not be over-ready to form one near this coast, as it might be turned to the advantage of Russia in case of an advance upon Constantinople. The Austrian steamers possess a sort of monopoly on this line, which it is surprising the Turks should allow, as the profits must be enormous. The charge is sixty-five francs for one night on board, including two meals; though the steamer is quite a second-rate vessel in every way.

The smell on board, resembling that of guano, was overpowering. There were in crates on deck no less than nine thousand fowls; each crate was about five feet long and two feet broad, and contained sixty fowls. No food or water was given to these unfortunate animals during their detention on board; vainly did they stretch their necks out, and, with open bills, pant for water. The ducks, again, seemed to feel it still more, and to be in great pain. The mate of the ship did not seem to understand our remarking upon the cruelty towards these poor creatures, but informed us that not unfrequently five hundred cases were shipped in a single voyage, containing no less than thirty thousand fowls, that of course great numbers were suffocated,

and that they often carry in addition as many as one thousand sheep. These are crowded into a comparatively small space below decks, and as there is not room otherwise, they frequently put them in layers, one layer standing on the backs of the other. On their arrival at Constantinople, many are found suffocated, and when we reflect how much these sheep can bear, they must suffer greatly in this horrid traffic.

All these sheep are horned, and the method of getting them on board is singularly barbarous. They are tied together four at a time by their horns, and being then hoisted up, are allowed to drop fifty feet into the hold of the ship. But so strong are these mountain sheep, that they do not break their legs in the fall, although they are rather stunned by it; the rope running out, fortunately somewhat checks the violence of their fall. The market of the immense city of Constantinople must be supplied with food of all kinds, but it is horrible to think that such dreadful cruelty should be practised upon these poor animals.

A large portion of the poop-deck was screened off with sails, etc., etc.; this arrangement being made for the family of a Pasha who was going to Constantinople, and behind this screen was located his harem. On entering the vessel the faces of the ladies were carefully concealed with the yasmak, but when they had entered their temporary lodging this was removed, and as a large portion of the partition was nothing but an open grating, there was no difficulty in observing the whole family, which consisted of about seven very good-looking ladies, who made no effort to conceal their faces, and one hideous Nubian slave girl, who took great pains to conceal hers.

The young son of the Pasha was a very good-looking boy, about nine years of age, who already bore the rank in the army of Kaima Kam, or major. To the sons of Pashas is frequently accorded a positive rank in the army, with pay, while they are

yet infants. Such indeed was sometimes the case in England a century ago, as shown by the well-known anecdote of the nurse, who, on being asked who was crying in the nursery, answered, "Oh, my lady, it's only the colonel, who is very fractious with his teeth."

On Thursday, the 6th of July, we found ourselves about fifteen miles from the entrance of the Bosphorus; the morning was beautifully bright and calm, and I could recognise many of the well-known hills on which I had been encamped in 1855, when in command of a Turkish division, lovely and picturesque positions looking over the Black Sea. We soon ran that distance, and rounding the castle lighthouse hove-to opposite the health station of Kavach. Here we left the vessel, and taking a caique for Therapia, we danced over the waves of the Bosphorus.

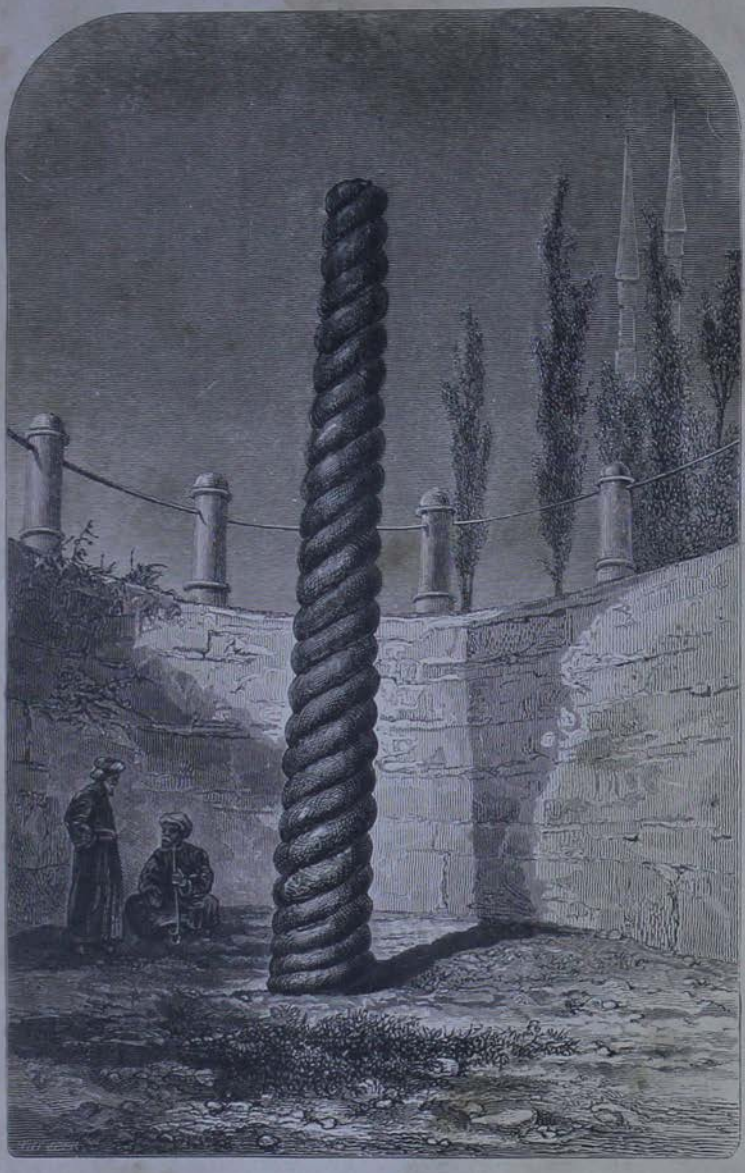
Therapia at this season is a cooler and pleasanter place than Pera, therefore we thought it would be more agreeable to spend at least a few days there.

The new house on the Bosphorus, built for the summer residence of the British ambassador, had a most imposing appearance; it is handsome, large, well built, and excellently planned. Very great credit is certainly due to Sir Henry Elliott, not only for this success, which I believe was entirely due to himself, but also for getting the work entirely finished for *less* than the estimated cost of ten thousand pounds.

The enemy I afterwards met in the Sea of Azof attacked me, but these choleraic symptoms soon yielded to the skill of Dr. Paul Hyades, a French physician attached to the service of the new French Republic. His kindness and attention deserve my warmest gratitude.

I remained for some days at Therapia, during which time my son hired a room at the top of the Hotel Pest, in Pera; the view from his apartment was truly magnificent. Immediately in front

was the Bosphorus, the lovely little Maiden Tower in the middle of the stream, and Scutari in the background; on the right the Seraglio Palace and old Stamboul, the Golden Horn, etc.; and on the left the magnificent palace of Dolme Batche, and the arsenal of Tophane. He enjoyed himself day after day in roaming over the old city, which, though well known to me, was new to him.



THE BRAZEN SERPENT FROM DELPHI, NOW AT CONSTANTINOPLE. P. 75.

CHAPTER XIV.

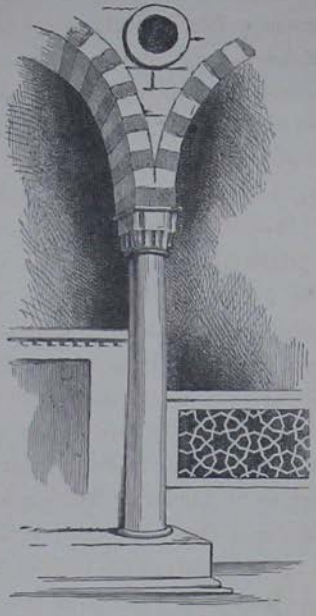
CONSTANTINOPLE.

On Saturday, the 15th of July, I paid my respects to the Seraskier Pasha, or Commander-in-Chief and Minister-of-War of His Imperial Majesty's army, at the new War Office in the centre of Stamboul. After a short general conversation about the army and the old war, respecting which he gave very guarded opinions, he showed me the magnificent rooms which had been lately built for the use of this military department. They had been lavishly decorated and furnished with the handsomest and softest carpets from Smyrna, and the most luxurious sofas and easy chairs from Paris. Much as I admired the whole, it was exceedingly difficult for me to divine the use of all this luxury in a military office.

Constantinople, including Pera, is wonderfully altered since the war. Enormous fires, which have taken place on either side of the Golden Horn, have swept away square miles of the curious old wooden houses, which in Stamboul have to a certain extent been replaced by more modern buildings of stone. This, however, does not seem to have been done with any regular order or system, and consequently there are between these fine buildings wide gaps, containing rubbishy looking little shanties, with rough, horrid roads, and dirty foul wastes in all directions.

In Pera things appear as if they would probably assume a better position. I hear that a municipal council has been

appointed, and if its sittings are conducted without jobbery and corruption, no doubt excellent results will follow, and Pera with its immense wealth will become a really fine town. Unfortunately the great fire of 1870 included in its ravages the splendid building of the British Embassy, the walls of which, however, are still intact. Sir Henry and Lady Elliott lost almost every thing they possessed in the burning of the palace.



COLUMN IN THE MOSQUE OF SULIMAN.

Tramways have already been laid down in the streets of Galata, in the lower part of the Christian city. In consequence of the streets being so narrow, they create the greatest danger and confusion; but they have the advantage of acting to a certain extent

as a counterpoise to the rapacity of the steamboat companies on the river, in regard to the inconvenience of whose boats too much cannot be said.

The worry occasioned by the obstinate use of Turkish time has not been as yet abated, it having been found impossible to induce the Grand Molah to consent to the adoption of the Christian computation of time. The Turks count the day from sunset to sunset, and as the time of sunset changes every day of the year, it is requisite to make a fresh calculation of time, involving a fresh setting of watches, every day. Can anything be more pig-headed than to insist upon retaining so obsolete a custom?

In regard to the appearance and dress of the Turkish ladies, astonishing modifications have taken place; the thick yasmak or covering for the face, which years of use have established as indispensable for old and young, handsome or ugly, has now given place to a pretty thin pink veil, which is tied under the most becoming little French hat, and through which their generally pretty features can be seen, almost as distinctly as ladies' faces in Western Europe; and their dress is gradually being adapted to a European style, their boots being now small and high heeled, and occasionally even fitted with a sort of sham brass spur.

The men seem to have changed also, but not in so marked a degree, as the changes in their case had preceded those of the ladies, and may be dated from the period of the destruction of the Janissaries in the early part of the reign of Mamood. Many of the Turkish gentlemen of superior station have adopted a peculiar cleanliness and smartness of appearance, and they are, with the exception of the fez, scarcely to be distinguished in appearance from the gentlemen of the West; but the fez, although somewhat modified in shape and colour, is still worn by every one whose nationality or service is claimed by the Sultan.

In financial recklessness, I believe the Turk far to have surpassed his former self. They have borrowed and mortgaged in every conceivable direction. The treasury bonds are held at fourteen per cent. interest; and, as they have been unable to meet the payment of the dividends, they have been compelled to pay compound interest at fourteen per cent. upon it. Still, with a power of granting concessions of all kinds—railways, harbour dues, land improvements, drainage, coal mines, and other minerals, oil duties, stamps, etc., etc.—so great are the natural resources of this country—so advantageous is its geographical position—so wonderful its soil, and so excellent its climate—that they have by no means reached that limit of their powers of raising money which would cause a national bankruptcy. If, however, they continue the same course they have pursued since the war, this result would appear inevitable; but, until that day arrives, they probably will borrow on, regardless of the future consequences, and at the most reckless interest, so long as lenders can be found to supply them with money.

The following interesting and true anecdote was told me in connexion with the last great Exhibition in England, and goes far to prove the benefits which our manufacturers have derived from those Exhibitions.

Before the London Exhibition, the manufacturers and merchants of Pera and Stamboul held a meeting, at which the subject of their sending specimens of their goods was discussed. "Well," they said, "Europe accuses us of lethargy and want of progress. Let us unite and send to this Exhibition perfect specimens of our manufactures, in order to show them that we can do something yet in this our great Eastern capital; that we still live."

Amongst them was an old and respected Turk, who, after carefully putting aside his pipe, thus addressed them:—"I am

anxious to say a few words to this meeting before it adopts any final conclusion."

"Good, good," was repeated on all sides. "Let us pay attention to the wise words of our brother, the Hadji."

"Well," said he, "I am an old man, counting more summers than many of your fathers. I have witnessed all the wonderful changes which have occurred in this country from a time long anterior to the reign of Sultan Mamood, and I have never known any good to result to us from these Frank devices. A presentiment of foreboding evil comes over me, and bitterly, in my opinion, will you all rue the day on which you gave assistance to these Giaour inventions."

"O Hadji!" a somewhat more adventurous young man answered; "we know how you love your religion and your country, and how justly you hate the Feringhee! In this we all concur; but, Mashallah, this time we will confound and astonish him. Am I not a manufacturer of Brussa? And will I not send such samples of striped cloths and towelling as he cannot equal! No; he shall not always cast dirt upon our beards!"

"Well, well," said the Hadji; "it used to be considered that the words of the old were full of wisdom; but times are changed. God is great! There is no God but God! I hope I may not see the day on which you will all bitterly repent what I consider is the utmost want of wisdom—the emanations of pride: beware, I say, of these cunning Feringhees."

The council of merchants this time carried out their project with an energy very different from the usual Turkish apathy and indifference. Specimens of works in brass, in coffee-cup holders, in small coverlids, in Brussa cotton-silk mixtures, and in Brussa bath towelling—an especial manufacture of this city—were carefully collected, the prices carefully marked on each;

and directions given that on the closing of the Exhibition these samples should be disposed of.

Thus far all went well. The goods were generally admired, and all were eventually sold at the prices indicated. The money was scrupulously paid to the Exhibitors, and the words of the old Hadji apparently came to naught.

Meeting at the Hummums or bath some time after, the young merchant addressed the old Hadji in a somewhat contemptuous tone, saying, "Well, Hadji, what has come of all your prognostications of evil, resulting from the exposition of our manufactures in the great London Palace? Have we not made the beards of the unbelievers grow white with envy?"

"Oh!" answered the old man. "Seed which is sown must have due time to fructify. Yours has only lately been sown on Giaour soil. Wait until the year is out, and then we shall see the result. I have sad forebodings of evil. I altogether mistrust these Franks and their cunning ways."

The season passed over. But towards the summer of the following year there appeared an unusual quantity of Brussa mixed cotton-silk cloth and towelling in the markets both of Pera and of Stamboul. The Brussa merchants began to make inquiries of each other as to why they thus flooded the markets to their own detriment; and, upon comparing notes, they found that rather less striped pieces had been manufactured this year in Brussa than the last, and, certainly, much less towelling. But, what was still more remarkable, the prices demanded by the retail vendors were less than the manufacturers charged.

Mashallah! the secret was out. These cunning Feringhees had purchased the samples, had imitated them with such perfect exactness that no difference could be detected. The victory of machinery over hand labour was complete. The land of coal had triumphed. Manchester Brussa towelling was selling in Brussa

cheaper than Brussa could make it, and the prophecy of the old Hadji was fulfilled. "Beware of those cunning Feringhees!"

My first visit to Constantinople was in 1839. Then Turkey was genuine Turkey—a Frank in the bazaar a rarity—to go into a mosque a sacrilege—to look at a Turkish lady an offence. If the fine old Turk of that day could but see some of the metamorphosed dandies of the present, he would believe that the ashes of his forefathers had turned in their graves. Since then I have frequently visited this city, and each time it was becoming more Europeanised, and losing its old Oriental character.

Whether Turkey is too sick to recover or not, must be left to time to determine; but that she is ill—very ill—and that most of the remedies applied for some years past have not had any very beneficial effects is beyond doubt. She naturally possesses great vitality; and is upheld also by the jealousies and fears of the most powerful nations of Europe; but the Turks are surely in a poor way, and nothing less than a miracle can make them a self-reliant and honest nation, or place them on a par with their European neighbours.

When making preparations for the tour of the Caucasus, which we expected to be a difficult and somewhat arduous undertaking, I was presented to Baron Steiger, the chief of the bureau in Constantinople of the Russian Company in the Black Sea. Our difficulties consisted principally in our want of knowledge of the Russian or Georgian languages; and it was a question whether we should take with us an interpreter from Constantinople, or write to procure one at Poti. Baron Steiger strongly advised us on no account to go without one, as he said we actually should be lost in the country—and instanced to us the fate of an American gentleman whom lately he had been obliged to rescue at Tiflis, and lead back to Europe.

We, however, were yet uncertain of the necessity of this

measure, being perfectly aware of the consequent expense of it, and, further, of the loss of freedom and of self-responsibility, which placing yourself in the hands of a dragoman invariably engenders. Finally we determined to trust to ourselves—a conclusion which we were far from repenting, for there is no doubt we should otherwise have lost most of the novelty and interest of the expedition. I, however, must add that colloquially we were pretty good masters of the French language, otherwise we could not possibly have succeeded in extricating ourselves from the difficulties which subsequently surrounded us.

CHAPTER XV.

ODESSA.

On Tuesday, the 18th of July, we embarked on board the Russian steam-ship Elbrutz. Previously to our leaving Galata we were stopped by a custom-house officer, and informed by his confederate that if I would give him a baksheesh, my trunks should undergo no examination. This, assisted by a hot sun, raised my bile. I determined not to comply, and told him so, when he, seeing, as he expressed it in the Turkish language, that we were mad Englishmen, thought it best to say no more, but let us pass by.

Just before we started, I received a visit on board from the Russian Consul-General Hitsowo, who, hearing that we intended to visit the Crimea, and perhaps the Caucasus, entirely unsolicited on our part, brought three or four letters of presentation to his friends, which he thought might be useful to us, and which eventually proved of the greatest service. But this was only one of the numerous instances, which I shall have occasion to mention, of the great kindness of every Russian employé. The pains and personal inconvenience which they are at all times ready to undergo, in order to show courtesy to a stranger visiting their country, cannot be overrated.

The Elbrutz was a screw merchant-steamer, of about seven hundred tons, belonging to the great Black Sea Company; she

was not very fast, but a comfortable ship. We were provided each with a large cabin, the more agreeable as the weather was very hot. We dined while going up the Bosphorus. It was our first experience of a Russian dinner. We commenced with caviare, olives, ham, etc., and a nip of brandy; this was followed by soup, etc., etc. It was fortunate that all this was got over before we entered the Black Sea, which on this occasion was very angry, and recalled to us the lines of Lord Byron on this subject, which, though rather rude, were very appropriate. We passed, altogether, a most disagreeable night; for although long use has hardened me to its effects, yet a rough tumbling sea, in a ship with scarcely more than her ballast in, is most unpleasant.

Amongst our first-class passengers we had a very fiery Frenchman and a hot-headed German: deep and angry were the recriminations which passed between them—the Frenchman vowing that nothing but a march on Berlin would satisfy the vengeance of France, or remove the bitter hatred which he, in common with all his countrymen, felt for those Vandals who had dared not only to desecrate, but to rob fair France of her soil. The German, excessively vain-glorious of the war, did his best to irritate the Frenchman, and stated that not only were they ready to meet the French again, but that, probably before ten years, they would have overrun Great Britain also, and have made her disgorge ten times the amount which they extracted from France. Therefore by this may be seen what agreeable mess companions we had on this voyage, and how grateful we were when the Black Sea became somewhat calmer, allowing a corresponding improvement in their digestions.

The Russian Navigation Company is entirely under the auspices of the Government. It would seem they use it as a means of fostering the naval skill of the officers of the Russian Navy,

which certainly is a very good plan in time of peace. The shares in this company were originally issued at 150*l.*; they have, under good management and Government protection, gone up to 630*l.*, and are said steadily to pay the original proprietors about forty-five per cent. per annum. I am afraid few concerns in England could be quoted as equally successful.

The upper deck of the Elbrutz was covered with baskets of the most inviting looking fruits and choice vegetables; and as each basket was shaded over with a piece of pink gauze, the appearance was striking and uncommon. I counted four hundred and sixty baskets, each about two feet across, containing pears, plums, melons, apricots, and tomatoes.

There was a curious bevy of passengers in the third class—Jews, Georgians, Armenians, and Crim-Tartars; they all appeared very civil and good-tempered. The captain and officers of the vessel were most obliging. We were here introduced for the first time to the habit of continually imbibing hot tea, served up in tumblers, with sugar and a slice of lemon. I do not know any beverage more pleasant and inviting in hot weather, or one which grows more upon a traveller.

On the morning of the 20th July we sighted the light-house, about five miles south of Odessa, and soon after passed the point of Picola Fortuna, on which her Majesty's ship Tiger was stranded in the war, and not being able to be got off, was captured by a field battery of Russian artillery, drawn up on the bank, immediately above her. From the position in which she lay she could not answer the Russian guns, which, therefore, leisurely continued to rain shot upon her until she hauled down her colours.

When we came alongside the wharf an enormously fat police or sanatory officer took possession of our passports, registering our names, etc. Military rank appeared to take

precedence of all other claims for attention, and nothing could exceed the politeness with which the custom-house officers released us from all embarrassment, and expedited us to our hotel.

Mounting a strange little carriage, called a drotsky, driven by a rather ragged and long-bearded old man, we soon reached the London Hotel, which was well situated, overlooking the harbour and the sea. The above old man demanded from us exactly four times his proper fare. He was, however, very well contented on being paid double. The landlord of this hotel, a Frenchman, behaved so impertinently, that I was glad to leave his house for the Hôtel de l'Europe, where we were well treated. I understood afterwards, that this incivility was not unusual on his part, and that last year, in consequence of his insulting an aide-de-camp of the Governor-General, he had the option of paying a heavy fine, or leaving the city. I should consider it safe to avoid him.

A very magnificent harbour has been formed at Odessa, which is naturally no more than a roadstead. Large piers of stone have been built into the sea, especially to screen it from the south-east. I counted at least three hundred vessels in the harbour, and many of these of very great size; one or two of no less than three thousand tons. Experience has shown that a far greater profit, in proportion, can be realised from the larger vessels, and these are now regularly used on this line. One of these very large ships is able to convey to England a cargo of wheat valued perhaps at twenty or even thirty thousand pounds, and they can make four or even five trips during the year. A breakwater, something like that at Plymouth, is also in contemplation, which will enable five or six hundred vessels to receive safe berths. The trade in corn is increasing in a wonderful way at Odessa, in consequence of the lately constructed

railroads, which bring immense quantities from the interior of Russia.

As we walked through the streets we saw large buildings, intended originally for houses, but now turned into stores for corn. Great numbers of men were employed in shifting the grain, to prevent mildew and damp. I was surprised that no use was made of the plan adopted in America, at Chicago and elsewhere, by which the corn is raised by steam power and a species of endless wheel, with buckets, directly from the hold of the vessels into the highest chambers of the store-house, whence it can be directed into the several rooms or bins at pleasure, by which means the wheat can be shifted and dried at a trifling expense, compared with that of manual labour. With good management, the corn might be directed right into the holds of the vessels for exportation. The daily rate of labour for this description of work, when I was in Odessa, was in my opinion very high indeed; an able-bodied man received per diem about two and a half or three roubles, about seven shillings of our money. At the same time it must be borne in mind that these people are very ignorant, and somewhat unscrupulous and unruly, and they might, on seeing these steam-acting warehouses for grain springing up, take the matter into their own hands and burn them down, a circumstance not altogether unusual in Russia.

The city of Odessa is handsomely situated above the harbour, which it dominates. It owes much of its importance to the good administration of the Duc de Richelieu, a French emigré, who was for a long time its governor, and subsequently to that of Prince Waronzoff, that enlightened statesman, under whom everything that he undertook prospered. Odessa is wisely not defended by any fortifications, and to this circumstance it probably owes its immunity during the last war; for the days of bombarding a defenceless city are happily past. The natural penalty, which

would in time of war accrue to it, would be that of being closed as a commercial port by any naval power which had the command of the sea.

During the last war a battery was erected near the Parade, and the English guns captured in the Tiger were mounted upon it, which some unfortunate Russian artillerymen were directed to fire on the occasion of a salute. The first gun burst, doing much injury and killing some of the gunners; nevertheless, they were directed to fire a second gun, which shared the same fate, upon which they agreed that Russian gunpowder was too strong for English guns! The facts afterwards transpired that before the vessel was deserted, these guns had been rendered useless by being heated and then cast into the sea, which so injured their temper that they burst at the first discharge.

Lying on the wharf were a large number of Krupp guns, which had come by rail from St. Petersburg. They are said to be destined for the forts which defend Nicolaef and Kertch. They appeared to be of about eight inches in diameter.

Soon after breakfast, I presented a letter which had been given to me at Constantinople by Consul-General Hitsowo, to his Excellency General Conseiller d'Etat Jonace Ottmanstein. Nothing could exceed the kindness of his reception, and although he was occupied in writing an important despatch, he paid us immediate attention, and within two hours he returned my visit, and gave me a letter of introduction to Admiral d'Arkas, commanding the fleet in the Black Sea, who was residing at Nicolaef, to which place we had stated we were anxious to go on the following day.

The few purchases which we made here gave us proof of the kindness of the people, and it was agreeable to find how widely they differed from the cheats at Pera and Stamboul. Like honest people they demanded reasonable prices, without augment-

ing them because we were strangers, and gave us every assistance, which was often very requisite, in consequence of our total ignorance of the Russian language. Our first day in Russia gave us most favourable impressions of all classes of her people.

CHAPTER XVI.

NICOLAEF.

HAVING heard in England so much of what was being done at Nicolaef, we determined, although at considerable inconvenience, to visit it, and see as much as the authorities would allow us. Shortly after midnight therefore we left Odessa for Nicolaef in a small Russian steamer called the Argonaut.

By three in the morning of the 21st, we were opposite the "Kinborn Spit," passing which we entered the river Bug. This estuary is wide and very shallow, and without great attention to the numerous buoys which have been carefully laid down, a ship that drew more than fourteen feet of water would soon run aground. The channel itself from Kinborn to Nicolaef is about nineteen feet deep, and is very narrow; before the war it had been deepened to twenty-four feet; it is of soft mud, and a vessel drawing twenty, or even twenty-two feet, may easily be forced through it.

At a distance of seven or eight miles from the landing-place of Nicolaef we approached three very strong forts, one built on an island in the centre of the river, and one on either bank; the fire of each crossing that of the other. A very narrow channel, well under the fire of their guns, was left open for vessels to pass up and down the river. Very heavy Krupp guns have been recently mounted on these forts, and these were said to have

been tested the previous day with most satisfactory results. Strong as these forts seemed to be, I believe that they are by no means impregnable, but I do not think myself justified in giving here a detailed opinion upon this subject. Above these forts, the river for about six or seven miles winds considerably, the town of Nicolaef being always within view on the heights.

The steamer now stopped near to a very long bridge over the river, laid upon floating punts. Here at anchor lay his Imperial Majesty's yacht named The Tiger, the machinery for which was taken from Her Majesty's ship Tiger, that ran ashore below Odessa during the war.

We called upon Admiral d'Arkas, who, however, could not receive us till the afternoon, as he was engaged with the Minister of Marine, who had lately come from St. Petersburg to inspect the arsenal, and to make arrangements for building some heavy iron steam rams. In the interim we obtained a very satisfactory view and sketch of the docks, and were much interested with the operations of a diver in the channel of the river, which flowed from the docks into the Bug, from which we could make a tolerably accurate guess as to the depth of the water. We then drove into the town.

The great traveller, Dr. Clarke, visited Nicolaef about the year 1809, and he then spoke of it as being about the third city in the empire. If such was the case, how greatly must many of the cities of Russia have progressed since that time; for although Nicolaef may possess qualities which may one day make it a great city, yet at present it is not much more than a large straggling town.

At two in the afternoon we again called upon Admiral d'Arkas, a fine, open-hearted sailor, evidently possessing many of the characteristics of a British seaman. He gave us an order

to see both the arsenal and the docks, placing an intelligent officer of the navy at our disposal.

The arsenal and dockyards are situated on the banks of the Ingul, within a quarter of a mile from the junction of that river with the Bug. The Ingul is here about half a mile broad, and apparently deep. We saw three large sheds for ship-building, and a long range of workshops. Two of Nasmyth's steam hammers were erected, and we were told there was a machine on a small scale for bending iron plates. We also saw a few cutting and planing machines, but we were much astonished, after all that we had heard in London, to see so very little. Many private yards in England and Scotland possess workshops and machinery of tenfold the value and extent of anything we saw at Nicolaef, and there is yet a great deal to be done before these dockyards can be accounted of much consideration. Comparatively few men were employed, but this, we were told, was owing to the great pressure at that time for labour in the neighbouring country to get in the harvest, which was literally rotting in the fields for want of hands to gather it, although three or four roubles a day were being given for such work.

A yacht for the Emperor, built of mahogany, was on the stocks, but it could not be proceeded with in consequence of the want of that wood. There was a very large rope-walk, and also a rocket manufactory, rockets being a very favourite weapon with the Russians in Asia. The slips for building iron-clads were in course of construction, and I was told that they hoped to construct twelve vessels after the model of our Abyssinia. They desire much to do this with Russian iron, forged with Russian coal, and worked by Russian machinery, but it must be many years indeed ere they can carry into execution so praiseworthy a conception.

If the Russians purchase their iron-clads in England, and are

permitted to sail them through the Bosphorus, then they may quickly have an iron-clad fleet in the Black Sea, but one cannot conceive that the Sultan will give permission for so dangerous a fleet to pass through the Dardanelles and Bosphorus. If they are to transport each piece in merchant vessels to Nicolaef, or by railway from St. Petersburg, and then to put these heavy vessels of war together in the docks on the Ingul, they would not only cost more money than probably Russia has at command, but would require an indefinite time for their completion.

The naval arsenal is completely hidden from the approach by sea up the river Bug. It is not defended by any fortifications or guns, but it could not be approached by an enemy on the river until the forts previously alluded to were captured. In the model-room we saw the model of the Twelve Apostles, a one-hundred-and-twenty-gun ship sunk in Sebastopol in 1854.

In the evening we were most hospitably received by the Consul-General, Mr. Stephens, although he was only recovering from a very dangerous illness. We were greatly interested by his wide and extended knowledge of Russia.

On returning to the Argonaut we found the harbour lit up with blue lights, in compliment to the Minister of War, who was returning to Odessa in the Imperial yacht Tiger.

On the 22nd of July we returned in the Argonaut to Odessa. I here think it right to record the extreme kindness of the Russian officers on board. Although we were perfect strangers to the captain, yet he volunteered to resign to us the entire use of his own cabin during the two days that we were in that ship.

Odessa now contains about one hundred and eighty thousand inhabitants, of whom eighty thousand are said to be Jews. These latter are very wealthy, and much disliked by the Christians. During last Easter every Jewish house in the city

but two was ransacked, and the furniture thrown into the streets: such was the violent ill-will of the Christians. A large amount of the landed property in the neighbourhood of Odessa is mortgaged to the Jews, who, until lately, were not permitted to possess land in their own right. It is said that, as a rule, the aristocracy in Russia are terribly involved in debt. At the death of a father of a family one-seventh of his property is allotted to his widow, one-fourteenth to each girl, and the remainder is equally divided among all his sons.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CRIMEA.

On Monday, the 24th of July, at 1 P.M., we left Odessa in the Russian steamer for the Crimea. We steamed out of the harbour at a rapid rate, passing among the shipping of all nations, the largest of which was an English merchant steamer of three thousand five hundred tons burden. She was really a splendid vessel. She had come from England laden with iron rails, and was about to return freighted with corn. The original value of this vessel was said to be about sixty thousand pounds, and her return cargo in corn was valued at about thirty thousand pounds. Her profit on this voyage, out and home, was reckoned about ten thousand pounds. Thus, if she could make three voyages to the Black Sea in one year, in addition to a voyage or two nearer home, a very fine return would accrue to her owners.

We had a calm passage across this part of the Black Sea. We were exceedingly comfortable on board; the Russians appeared to make it a study to be amiable to strangers, and especially to Englishmen. There is, however, in these vessels one regulation which is vexatious, but which is insisted upon with much strictness. The passengers in the saloon are at all times compelled to sit upright, and are not allowed to lie down upon the couches. If they do so, they are at once reminded by the stewards that

they are infringing the regulations. This is particularly vexatious when a person is slightly indisposed by sea-sickness.

Early on Tuesday morning we reached Eupatoria. Here we landed a few of our passengers, who intended to spend some time in sea-bathing at this part of the Crimea; for although Eupatoria is very inferior in point of beauty of scenery to Yalta, or even to Theodosia, yet it is more healthy and open, possesses a fine strand, and is infinitely cheaper, and nearer to Odessa. It is much cooler than Sebastopol. There is nothing remarkable in Eupatoria; but the town seemed to be more flourishing than in 1854, when a few days before the battle of the Alma we arrived before it, with the allied fleets and armies.

About 11 A.M. we entered the harbour of Sebastopol. Scarcely any change existed since the day we left it in 1855. The town is still one vast ruin, which it would take years of toil and enormous sums of money to replace in its former grandeur.

Sebastopol, before the occupation in 1855, is said to have contained eighty thousand inhabitants, and now it can scarcely count eight thousand. Fort Constantine stands proudly on the northern side; but not one stone remains to indicate the position of the southern forts, which were many times more extensive than it.

We visited the Museum, in a new house built by the government for General Totleben, and presented by him to the city for the purpose of a museum; in it are collected some of the most interesting memorials of the siege.

As our plan was to continue our voyage to Yalta, and return from thence by the Pass of Thoros and the valley of Baidar, we had but a short hour now in Sebastopol; and leaving again about one in the afternoon, we passed the lighthouse at Kamiesh, the monastery of St. George, and the entrance to the harbour of Balaclava.

THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL AS IT NOW IS. P. 96.

We passed the palace of Prince Woronzoff at Alupka. Its situation is most lovely, particularly from the sea. The gardens descending to the water's edge, terraces rising above terraces, clad with vines interspersed with cypresses, gave a most beautiful effect, the whole being surmounted with magnificent crags, the summits of which are probably two thousand five hundred feet high. A great many handsome houses are now being built near Prince Woronzoff's, and doubtless before many years are passed every available point will receive its villa. His Imperial Majesty appears very fond of the Crimea, and his example will naturally set the fashion for the members of the aristocracy of Russia to build country villas there.

While running along the coast, we had a fine view of the Tchadirdagh, or tent-mountain, so called from its shape; it is by far the highest land in the peninsula, and has a very striking appearance.

About 5 P.M. we anchored in Yalta roadstead. There were very few ships there, and those of the meanest description. We put up at the Hôtel de Crimea, opposite the landing-place, a very inferior hotel, where, with the exception of a little German, no language was spoken but Russian.

We obtained one room between us, with a thin screen dividing it. Our beds were laid on wooden tressels, which, however, we were glad to relinquish for the narrow divan sofas. A coverlid and one sheet each was all that was supplied to us, two sheets to each bed being never given in Southern Russia; and in the wilder parts no bed linen whatever can be procured, the traveller always bringing his own. No towels were given, and the only washing apparatus provided was one small basin, the size of a slop-bowl, and this in a climate where the thermometer stands at ninety degrees in the shade. For this rude accommodation, the modest sum was demanded of five roubles, or fourteen shillings

per day, which, upon a representation of its being too high, was reduced to twelve shillings. The meals were served à la carte, and the living was as poor and as dear as the lodging.

The next morning gave us a most lovely view of the mountains in rear of the town, and a fine sea breeze tempered the heat of the sun during the whole day.

We paid our respects to Aide-de-Camp General Kotzebue, the Governor of New Russia, who received us most kindly, and took great pains to facilitate our journey through the Crimea. He is the smallest officer I ever saw, wiry, intelligent, and very smart. He is just seventy years of age, but looks scarcely sixty. He appeared to live in a moderate retiring way. He was rather vain of his own powers of endurance, pitying me for being unable to equal them, on which point I was too polite to contradict him; but in a five-mile gallop across country, or in the hardship of an Eastern journey, I felt I could any day show him his match.

I had to procure a carriage to take us to Sebastopol, which a Tartar, after some trouble, agreed to do for thirty roubles, or four pounds sterling. Of course, this was a gross overcharge, the posting being little more than four roubles or twelve shillings; but we had nothing to do but to submit. I think it is a pity that some police arrangements in regard to the hire of these carriages are not made, for in the long run these absurd charges are detrimental to all the inhabitants; strangers soon find out the localities in which they are imposed upon, and fewer travellers resort to them. Had we been as well acquainted, as we afterwards were, with the Telega or Pericordinia system of travelling, we should without scruple have taken one of those Russian post carts at once.

In the afternoon we rode to Lavadia, the palace of the Empress, a pretty country house of no great pretensions; and to Orianda, the palace of the Emperor, a much larger place, both beautifully situated in lovely positions on the side of the mountain, with

magnificent views of the coast and Black Sea. The chapel at Lavadia is one of the most chaste and beautiful things I saw during the whole time I was in Russia. After viewing it we rode up the hill to a very pretty châlet, where the Empress has a farm. It is said that Her Imperial Majesty here throws aside all her royalty, and zealously performs the office of dairy-maid, thoroughly enjoying her country pleasures and recreations after the enforced slavery of her high position.

On the road up the hill we met several of the Russian country carts, made entirely of wood, without the smallest piece of iron about them. They appeared strong, and well fitted to encounter the rough mountain roads which they had to travel. Only bullocks are used in these carts, and they seem to be of the most patient description, and very obedient to their drivers. They went on their way about two miles per hour, cheered by the music of the monotonous creaking of their wheels.

After visiting the cows, which were tended after the English style, and examining the rest of the Imperial farm, we descended the hill by a new road which had just been made by order of the Empress, reaching home after a ride of about four hours.

Not having made a bargain for the hire of the horses, but having left this to the police officer who was sent with us, fourteen roubles, or about two sovereigns, were demanded for the three wretched ponies—another example of the dishonesty of these people, and of the necessity of settling all prices beforehand, however contrary this may be to the customs and feelings of an Englishman. We paid ten roubles for the use of the ponies, and positively refused to give any more, at which the men were far from evincing any surprise, but, on the contrary, considered they had made a very good thing out of us.

As another instance of the exactions imposed upon strangers in the Crimea, I may mention that on the following night we slept

at Baidar, and endured a rather unusual quantity of dirt and vermin, being accommodated in a poor sort of farm-house. They had nothing to give us but a pot of milk and six eggs, and for this they were not contented with less than seventeen shillings.

Many reasons no doubt conduce towards these excessive charges. Few Russians travel except with the intention of spending large sums of money. In fact, it is only the wealthy who travel at all for pleasure, and the custom of lavishly dispensing money is much fostered by the customs of the Court. For instance, in the immense empire over which he reigns, the Emperor is unable to visit many districts more than once in his life; but it is politic and requisite that he should leave a good opinion wherever he goes, and in no way can this be more successfully secured than by leaving a large sum of money. His presence in Yalta is a perfect fortune to the householders. He now generally visits Lavadia and Orianda every year in the autumn, bringing with him about two hundred persons attached to his court, and remaining about a month or so. A large number of place-seekers flock to his receptions, and pit their chances of success against their heavy expenses. At that time, the not unfrequent charge for a room in Yalta is twenty roubles, or about £2 15s. per night; and for the use of a carriage, a small phaeton to attend a reception, I was informed that from fifty to sixty roubles, or about £6 10s., was generally demanded.

This imposes a serious expenditure upon the casual traveller, who, although he may have been led to expect high prices, is scarcely prepared for such as these, and yet what can he do but submit? He cannot sleep in the street, and having come so far, he argues that it would be a folly to return, without seeing what he has come to see, and thus he becomes another victim.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SEBASTOPOL.

At six A.M. we started *en veturino* for Sebastopol, having engaged a carriage for two days, on the understanding that we might loiter on the road, to sketch for as many hours in the day as we might wish. The distance is eighty-three versts, or about sixty miles. The carriage was a roomy victoria, said by the owner to have been built in London, but probably built in Vienna.

Making our first halt at the village of Alupka, we visited the palace of Prince Woronzoff. It is very spacious and handsome, built of green limestone, after a design of the English architect, Blower. The grounds are perfectly lovely—words can scarcely do justice to them: deliciously cool marble fountains, which never cease to play; trellised vine-clad arcades, grottoes, and shaded walks succeed each other in endless variety. Magnificent rocks and mountains overhang the gardens, and add grandeur to the whole. Nor are these grounds entirely for recreation: large and profitable vineyards have been planted on the estate, the wine and brandy from which realise a considerable sum. In my opinion, however, there is no really good wine made either in the Crimea, or on the Don, or in the Caucasus. It is said that on an estate near Massandra, above Yalta, Prince Woronzoff used to make very excellent Cliquot champagne; but that, having discharged

the superintendent, the secret of its manufacture was lost. The cognac brandy, however, which is also made here, is by no means a bad imitation of the genuine French article.

There certainly must be some profound secret, or it must require unusual intelligence, to make wine; for it would seem that there is no real success except in Spain, France, and Germany.

The villages on this road are almost entirely inhabited by Tartars. The houses are flat-roofed, and the country bears a strong resemblance to many parts of the Himalayas. Near Alupka, at the top of a very steep hill, we saw a signboard, on which was painted a carriage-skid, practically reminding the traveller of the danger of descending the hill without using this article. The idea was clever and useful.

The formation of the peninsula of the Crimea is remarkable. About three-fourths of the whole consists of an undulating steppe, similar to the rest of Southern Russia, a very narrow fringe at the edge of the rivers being devoted to garden purposes, where rich vineyards, fruit-trees, and all sorts of vegetables profusely flourish; otherwise it is a corn-growing country, and is entirely devoid of trees. The remaining fourth part is of an entirely different character, far more resembling parts of Switzerland than Russia; here are rugged mountains of great height, deep valleys, forest trees, and most picturesque scenery. This latter portion is of a triangular form, in which Yalta, Alupka, and Batcheserai are the principal towns. It is on the southern slopes of these mountains, and facing the sea, that the vineyards have been planted; they are perfectly sheltered from the northern winds, and are yearly increasing in importance. The contrast of these two regions is very striking to the traveller, as he passes from mountains and fertile valleys to boundless plains entirely devoid of trees.

I should prefer remaining at Alupka rather than at Yalta, if residing for any time in this country.

To the west of Alupka we passed above the valley of Semeis, amidst fine rocky scenery and pine-clad mountains; while away to the south is the far-stretching Black Sea, now belying its name by looking intensely blue and serene.

At Alupka we had our first opportunity of inspecting a regular Russian posting-carriage. The principal objects aimed at in its construction are strength and simplicity—the first to bear the rough roads of the country, the second to enable it to be repaired in the most out-of-the-way districts. The body resembled that of a strong-built berlin, slung upon two long poles of elastic wood, and allowed free play on the axles. The fore and hind wheels were at a considerable distance apart, connected by a strong wooden perch; and the heavier the carriage was weighted in the centre, the easier would be its motion to the travellers. For simplicity of construction and durability it can scarcely be surpassed.

Towards sunset we arrived at the Pass of Thoros, and after a long ascent passed over into the valley of Baidar. Here we rested in the wayside house of an old Frenchman, whose poor accommodation and heavy charges have been already mentioned.

I observed that at Baidar, as in all villages in the Crimea, the swallows are freely allowed to build their nests under the eaves of the roofs. They are much cherished, as they are said to diminish, to an astonishing extent, the plague of flies, which otherwise would be most annoying to the inhabitants.

Rising at early dawn, we hurried up our driver, and were soon on the road. Passing through pleasant scenery and thick brushwood copses, where we came across some small roe deer, we arrived about eight a.m. at the post station above the valley of Balaclava. This house, as appeared from a notice which

still remained painted on it, had been built and occupied as the head-quarters of the Sardinian army.

We had now reached the field of Balaclava, interesting and yet so painful in its recollections. What mingled feelings of pride and pain arose as I sat upon the hill-side, the site of the Russian battery, and once again looked upon that field, having immediately beneath me the very point to which our noble light cavalry charged into the very jaws of death! On my left were the low mounds, which, on the morning of that eventful day, I saw taken by the Russian troops from the Turks who were placed there. And in front of me the Fiducane hills, which had been occupied by Russian infantry two days prior to the battle; and in the foreground was the position occupied by the Russian field artillery, the guns of which, according to the interpretation of the order, were directed to be captured.

All this country was now in peace and abounding in corn just reaped; but, in my mind's eye, it was still covered with the groaning, the dying, and the dead, as I had seen it on that memorable occasion seventeen years before. There still remained the profile of the small redoubt, in the ditch of which I saw poor Nolan's body flung, smashed in a terrible way, and close to which, Colonel Macdonald's feather was cut from his hat by a cannon shot, while I was conversing with him.

Again the Russian rifle pits, from which, while riding with Sir George Cathcart towards the close of the action, a heavy fire was suddenly opened upon us, which, however, by great good fortune, we both escaped. Between the redoubts I also saw the very spot from which poor Morris, that fine swordsman, was carried to the rear, covered with wounds; and where I heard the remark from the general of my division, that the charge was magnificent, but the loss terrible.

Farther, again, to the left was the position of the "thin red

line," so eloquently described by Mr. Russell, in which Sir Colin Campbell drew up his few Highlanders to meet and, as it proved, to repulse a charge of Russian cavalry. There, too, was the field of the charge of the heavy cavalry, on which I saw the noble Scarlett so proudly meet and drive back, with his handful of sabres, a host of Russian cavalry which advanced over the hill steadily up to his position. Immediately above was the spot from which was despatched the order for the capture of the guns, which subsequently created so painful a controversy.

When I looked over this now peaceful field, it appeared like a dream; but the recollections of that day of strife,—the wounds, and groans, and death, never can be banished from my remembrance.

CHAPTER XIX.

BALACLAVA.

Proceeding on from the field of Balaclava, and through the Turkish redoubts, we drove into the town of Balaclava. How deserted it looked; how different from the time when a constant busy throng crowded its small streets and wharfs; now a few listless Greeks and Russians loitered in the streets. Where the gallant Agamemnon rode in the midst of this tiny harbour, surrounded by countless steamers and ships of all sorts and sizes, now nothing but two rotting hulls encumbered the basin.

I visited the commandant's house, where I had so often been kindly received, and saw the old window-sill, where we had so often chatted of things of the siege, and about which a curious circumstance occurred. As soon as peace was finally concluded, a Russian officer walked into the commandant's office, and stating that the house was his own, asked if he was at liberty now to remove any personal property which he had left in it. It was represented to him that long since everything like furniture had disappeared; but that if he saw anything worth removing he was at liberty to take it. "Permit me," he replied, "to make an examination." And forthwith taking from his pocket a chisel and a hammer, he proceeded to remove the window-sill. His proceedings were watched with much interest. The wooden board was soon removed, when putting his hand in and drawing

out a heavy bag, he said, "Now I am completely satisfied; this bag has given me countless nights of anxiety. It contains all the gold, notes, and plate which I possessed. I placed it here for safe custody the night on which we received the fatal news of Alma. I could scarcely have believed that it would escape detection. With your permission I will now remove it." This was, of course, accorded. And placing the bag in his little drotsky, he drove out of the town.

Although the weather was fearfully hot we climbed to the top of the crag on which the old Genoese castle was built; we were accompanied by a soldier who said he had served, at the time of the war, in the Greek regiment, and had formed one of the garrison of defence when the town of Balaclava was taken. This man was doubly interested when I showed him the spot, near the end of the creek, where Sir Richard Airey and myself were nearly killed by a shell fired from the fort; and it was curious to receive his account of the obligation they felt they were under, if possible, to kill a few of us before they surrendered the fort, which they knew to be quite untenable.

His account of the capture of this little town was interesting. He said that the garrison, which only consisted of forty men, found themselves, in consequence of our flank march, entirely cut off from Sebastopol, and also saw a very large steamer outside Balaclava harbour. They, however, determined not to surrender without a shot. The steamer commenced by firing at them, but apparently was too close to elevate her guns sufficiently. The defenders turned the only two small field-pieces they possessed towards the land, and fired them as soon as they saw some officers of our staff turn the corner of the rocks. No sooner had they fired a couple of rounds than a battery of our horse artillery was unlimbered and brought into action, the fire from which he described as being so perfect as to decide them at once to give in.

I perfectly remember the field-guns being brought into action at the place he described, and saw that the whole account which he gave must have been entirely correct.

I inquired from this old soldier what rewards he had received at the end of the war. He then told me that being taken prisoner as above described, he was taken to Plymouth, in England, where for a year he was treated with the greatest kindness and generosity, and rationed sumptuously. That when the war was ended, he was sent back to Russia, not to the south, but, unfortunately, to St. Petersburg, from whence, with the greatest difficulty, he begged his way back to the Crimea. That he was then disbanded and received nothing, Russia having determined to have no Greek regiments in her pay. He farther added that he then recommenced to farm his little vineyard, which, he said, before the war had been very profitable, but, he added, "what has now bewitched it, my lord, I cannot tell, for ever since the war—now nearly seventeen years—it has scarcely produced any grapes whatever."

From Balaclava we ascended the hill on the road to Sebastopol, passing through Kadi-koi. How different now from the scenes so truthfully depicted in Simpson's sketches! We halted on the heights to take one look at Lord Raglan's house, which appeared to have undergone no perceptible change.

Diverging from our direct road we visited the French cemetery. I pause to say one word on this subject. The Russians have built a most costly, highly-decorated, and substantial monument to their dead,—a chapel in the form of a stunted hollow pyramid, built rather to defy the waste of ages than for external beauty. The interior, however, is gorgeous; and on slabs of polished black marble are the names of those illustrious men, who, commanding her troops, so worthily died in defence of their country. The French have walled in a large piece of ground, and erected small mausoleums, each dedicated to a regiment of that army

which carried on the siege so obstinately and with such terrible losses, on which are recorded the names of the leaders of her troops who fell in victory.

Where is the British record of our hard-won field, of all our sufferings? Nothing but a few mounds in detached places. No general memorial that shall stand for ages, and be visited by posterity. The subject, however, I was informed was under the consideration of the Foreign and the War Offices; and as it has now already been thus for seventeen years under consideration, it may be hoped that ere very long it will receive some satisfactory solution. Moreover, the Greek custodian who pretended to look after the English graves was dismissed for irregularity by the Consul at Kertch some time since, and now no one is either paid or authorised to attend to these graves.

On the evening of Friday, the 28th July, we found ourselves at Wetzel's Hotel, in Sebastopol. It was fortunate that we had telegraphed for rooms, otherwise we should have been reduced to the necessity of sleeping in our carriage, no uncommon thing at this the bathing season. We were very well treated at this hotel, where we remained for four days; and the charges were moderate, a circumstance too exceptional to be left unrecorded.

The weather, however, was exceedingly hot, rendering any exertion painful, and exposure somewhat dangerous. The heat was greater than usually to be met with in the hottest parts of India, with none of the palliatives to be found there. Nevertheless, on Saturday we spent nearly eight hours on horseback, carefully following up many well-known former footsteps.

About 9 A.M., leaving Sebastopol by the Karabelnaia suburb, we first proceeded up the Valley of Death, then turned towards the right attack and followed it to the Redan, and from thence to the Malakoff tower. Having well examined these interesting spots, we rode to the windmill, or old powder magazine, and

thence to the field of the battle of Inkerman. The old windmill appeared unaltered from the time my tent stood within a few hundred yards of it, in the winter of 1854. While we made use of it as a powder magazine it caught fire, the top was burnt off, and little was known of the cool bravery of those who removed the powder from the burning mill.

MALAKOFF.

The farm buildings also were there, where, on the night of Inkerman, I had seen so many hundred poor fellows, English, French, Russians, undergoing the most agonising operations, writhing in their pain. And I recognised the spot near the large well, with now no sign or record, but under which I full well know lie hundreds of French corpses, the victims of cholera, and who were hurriedly interred, even without the customary

office of straightening their bodies from the attitudes of contortion in which they died; but now all this ground looked so tranquil, with nothing to disturb it except the presence of a few young lambs nibbling the somewhat ranker sward.

I looked, too, at the valley where my little tent had been pitched, and from whence I was roused that foggy November morning, the day of Inkerman, and where we had crouched during the fearful storm, when the steamer "Prince" went down in the Bay of Balaclava. There, too, my kind commander, a rigid disciplinarian, used to call me at all hours of the night to visit front, flank, and rear, frequently when the stars were my only guide. What feelings of thankfulness were now kindled in my breast when I recalled the numberless instances, on these very fields, in which I escaped so many dangers.

We now approached the field of Inkerman, of which such interesting accounts have been written, that I, perhaps, have no right to intrude another upon my reader; but as the few words I propose to give relate solely to my personal experiences on that day, they will not, I trust, be considered entirely inappropriate.

CHAPTER XX.

THE BATTLE OF INKERMAN.

At the battle of Inkerman my appointment was that of Quarter-Master General to the first division of the army, commanded by the Duke of Cambridge. I was colonel in the army. From the time of taking up our position on the heights before Sebastopol, it was my habit to visit carefully each outpost of my division every night, and also an hour or so before sunrise. At this time thick brushwood encumbered on all sides the ground on which we were encamped, and frequently I had no other guide than the stars, but guided faithfully by them, I never failed to strike upon the outposts.

Early in the morning of the 5th November, I had as usual carried out this duty, and paid particular attention to that portion of our position towards the Tchernaya valley, but had observed nothing unusual in that direction. About 7 A.M., being in a profound sleep after that fatiguing duty, I was awakened by an unusually heavy fire of musketry on our right front, or on that portion of our front held by the 2nd Division. The morning was misty, and little could be seen in any direction. His Royal Highness directed me again to visit immediately the outposts of his division, especially in the direction of the Canrobert redoubt, the right rear, in respect to which somewhat weak and extended position he appeared most reasonably to have some anxiety.

Having mounted one of my ponies I proceeded in that direction, and finding all quiet there, and having warned the officers in command to be extremely on the alert, I returned again to the head-quarters of my division. During this interval the fire in the right front was increasing in intensity. On returning, and when near the windmill used as a powder magazine, I met Colonel Strangways, Royal Horse Artillery, the senior officer of artillery with the army.

The engagement with the advanced posts of the 2nd Division of the army had now assumed a more serious aspect, and appearances indicated an attack in force. I suggested to Colonel Strangways, the advisability of sending towards the point of attack some pieces of heavier calibre than our nine, or even twelve-pounders, and asked him if he could not send up some eighteen-pounders, which, after some consideration, he said he thought he could do. He immediately rode off in the direction of the artillery reserves, and I proceeded on towards my tent. As the fate of the action is generally allowed to have depended very materially on these eighteen-pounder guns, together with the admirable manner in which they were worked under the command of Colonel Dickson, I felt no small pleasure in the share I had in their being sent into action. It is stated in some histories of the war that they were sent up by another officer of the Royal Artillery. This I cannot deny, but I relate the exact circumstances concerning them, as they occurred between the late Colonel Strangways (who was killed four or five hours later) and myself.

On returning to my tent I found His Royal Highness about to mount, and take his place with his division, which was then under arms and proceeding to the front. Mounting one of my chargers, a thorough-bred Irish horse, but the one of my three which I selected for the first chance of being killed, and leaving

my favourite American mare by the tents, I made the observation to my assistant in my duties, Captain Butler, that I felt sure we should have hot work this day. Poor Butler! I never saw him again alive. He was brother to the Silistrian hero, and was a brave and excellent officer.

Butler then galloped to the front, while I joined the Staff, proceeding with His Royal Highness, and accompanying the advance of the troops. We were then stationed near the Sandbag battery, our troops firing heavily upon the enemy, then apparently in retreat. Soon after this, among the bushes towards our left front, I saw my poor friend Butler lying upon the ground a corpse.

His Royal Highness and the Staff then took up a position more generally commanding the division; and here Field-Marshal Lord Raglan, with his Staff, amongst whom I saw Colonel Strangways, joined His Royal Highness. The fire of shot and shell soon became very severe, and much of it, whether by chance or otherwise I could not say, was directed upon the group of the Field Marshal. Poor Strangways, amongst many others, was killed, a cannon-shot smashing his thigh; and almost every officer of our Staff was hit, though none of them very seriously.

Our fire had now been very quick, and it was requisite to obtain fresh ammunition. I brought a reserve in boxes to the troops near the Sandbag battery, the Turks who had charge of the ponies behaving in a noble way. At this time the fire became tremendous; shot and shell devastating our ranks and doing much injury in the rear, among some light cavalry who were posted there. While delivering the ammunition I again came across the dead body of my friend Butler, but by this time he had been stripped of the best part of his clothes: his boots and socks were gone, proving to me that since I had left this spot we had lost and regained this post.

I had again joined His Royal Highness, and advanced with him and his personal Staff farther to the front; his object apparently being to effect a junction between his division and the troops of the division on his left. Russian and English dead literally encumbered the ground. The fire was very hot, and Colonel Clifton, A.D.C., received a piece of shell in his face. Finding, however, his eye uninjured, he did not give a second thought to it; and about this time, I think, His Royal Highness had a narrow escape, a ball piercing his coat-sleeve.

It was here that I came across a wing of the 20th Regiment, with my poor friend Dowling with them. About two years previously I had commanded a battalion of that regiment, and knew most of the men and officers. Dowling said to me, "Why, Colonel, all our mounted officers are either killed or wounded; where shall we go?" Nothing gave me more pleasure than the honour which by chance was thus conferred upon me of leading my old regiment in the field. Directing them to form a good line, I marched them directly upon a Russian battalion, and halted them when about one hundred yards distant, and directed them to open fire. Looking from my horse, over the wing of the 20th, I watched the firing—its effect appeared irresistible. I felt an additional satisfaction in thus testing the power of our rifles. Against the advice and opinion of some of the highest and most celebrated of our officers, the General Commanding-in-Chief, Lord Hardinge, had been so convinced of the efficacy of the rifle, in contradistinction to the smooth bore, that he had, even after war was declared and our troops were already in the field, changed the whole of the small armament of the Infantry. I firmly believe that it was to this circumstance that our successes, both at Alma and Inkerman, were mainly due, and all my subsequent conversations on this subject with Russian officers go far to prove it.

Recent experience has now caused us to look upon the smooth bore comparatively as a toy; but it must be borne in mind, that at that time no such experience existed, and that the only army then armed with the rifle was the army of Shamyl, in the mountains of the Caucasus, and the militia of Switzerland. Too much credit cannot be accorded to our Commander-in-Chief, who, braving public opinion and that of so many tried officers, took upon himself at this critical juncture to change the whole armament of the British army.

Not feeling myself justified in remaining longer with the 20th Regiment, I rejoined the head-quarters of my division. About three weeks later I read in the *Times* of the death of my poor friend Captain Dowling, who probably was killed soon after I left them. About this time I met Sir George Cathcart, who seemed determined to advance below the Sandbag battery. Knowing well the locality, I endeavoured to dissuade him from doing so, as productive, in my opinion, of no benefit; but, shortly after I had left, he advanced with his Staff, and was soon after killed, and all his Staff were also either killed or wounded. I also met the noble Peel on foot, field-glass in hand: his sole inquiries seemed to be for the spot of most danger.

His Royal Highness having assembled a reserve of Guards, again led them to the front, supporting the troops of his division in the Sandbag battery and those of the Second Division. I imagine that the Russians were about this time preparing their retreat, being now convinced that they not only could make no impression on us, but that their losses were frightful. A large body of French troops, Zouaves, etc., etc., I believe from General Bosquet's Division, now came up in column, and remained in this formation, near the ground on which the eighteen-pounder guns were in position. The Russians covered their retreat by a

vigorous fire of artillery, the heaviest, I think, I had seen during the day.

At this time Field-Marshal Lord Raglan, Marshal Canrobert, His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge, and a large Staff, were collected near the situation of the eighteen-pounder guns. The dead and the dying near this spot were in fearful numbers —French artillerymen, Russian and English soldiers, were mingled in death in all directions; dreadful were the wounds of many poor creatures, who as yet could not be sent to the rear.

Our troops now farther advanced, until they arrived under a heavy fire from the Russians posted on the opposite side of the Tchernaya, regardless of which they literally pushed the retreating Russians over the cliffs of Inkerman; numbers of them thus perished miserably in the valley beneath. The troops were then ordered to return over the field of battle to their several quarters.

His Royal Highness now directed the energies of his staff-officers to aid the wounded. How deeply we now regretted that we had no cacolets, or mule carriages, to assist in this service. The French, however, not having been deeply engaged, had little or no occasion for the services of their hospital corps, and readily placed it at our disposal; and of immense use it was, especially in the vicinity of the Sandbag battery, from whence we rescued many a poor friend and enemy, who probably would have succumbed during the night.

Evening and night coming on, we returned to our tents, and immediately proceeded to visit the field hospitals. Oh what sad scenes! no one can realise its horrors but those who have been there. The poor Russians were brought in and placed in a field hospital near the mill, attention being paid to their wounds as soon as possible, the heavy balls of the Minié rifle having given most ripping wounds.

Early next morning I proceeded to the field of battle, being directed to use my best endeavours to discover any wounded men, and to recover such articles as might be useful to the army during the coming winter. Here I met the indefatigable correspondent of the *Times*, Mr. W. Russell, examining minutely the position, and obtaining all the information which his rapid mind and pen could in such a magic way place intelligibly before those countless readers at home, all of whom were deeply interested in our proceedings. We had not been long there when the Russian batteries, from the opposite side of the Tchernaya, commanded, as I afterwards heard, by General Popoff, attracted by our gold bands, and thinking we were making a survey of their post, commenced firing shot and shell at Mr. Russell, Colonel Wilbraham, and myself, compelling us to relinquish our search for the wounded. But for this, many a wounded Russian soldier, whom we saw crawling towards the Tchernaya on his stomach, would have been carefully tended in our hospitals.

This, in a few words, is what came under my own observation on the field regarding the battle of Inkerman. There are many other interesting circumstances which I could recount, but they cannot find place in this brief sketch of the day.

Inkerman was a very bloody battle, fought on a confined space of ground; it frequently assumed the character of a hand-to-hand encounter with the bayonet, and especially so at the Sandbag battery. Here individual acts of heroism were numerous, and probably there is no action, inclusive of the old Peninsular campaigns, where the bayonet was more resorted to, or personal conflicts more frequent.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE FIELDS OF INKERMAN AND ALMA.

I NOW return to our ride over the battle-field. Leaving the windmill, we rode on towards the position held by the 2nd Division. I remarked the spot on which I had held my last conversation with Colonel Strangways, and also that on which Colonel Dickson, with such perfect judgment, had placed the eighteen-pounder guns. Turning thence towards the valley, I could almost point out the very spot, upon which I had seen my poor friend Butler's body, and the rising ground from which Lord Raglan watched the action; next the Sandbag battery, that scene of strife so nobly won and rewon, and finally held by the Guards; and farther to the left the line on which I had halted the wing of the 20th Regiment, and the point at which Sir George Cathcart had descended to his death. The very faces of the dying Russian and English soldiers and French artillerymen came back with force to my mind. I could scarcely realise that seventeen long years had passed, or believe how much of the wide globe's surface I had traversed in the interval.

Having minutely examined the whole ground, we rode down into the Tchernaya valley, and crossing the bridge, after having examined the aqueduct, we entered the court-yard of the Convent of Inkerman. We here visited the chapels, cut many centuries since out of the rock; they are most interesting and curious,

highly decorated, and furnished with some fairly-executed pictures of saints. The monks pointed out to us many traces of the war, the shutters being riddled with rifle-bullets, and also one twelve-pound shot which, on the day of the battle of Inkerman, had entered the inner chapel and struck the altar. The monks were very civil and obliging, heating their samovar and giving us an excellent cup of hot tea before our departure.

From the convent we had a good view of the channel, cut both under and on the face of the rock, by the engineer, Mr. Upton, which, by diverting the waters of the Tchernaya, enabled the basins of the docks to be replenished with water at pleasure. We then rode by the side of the harbour into the city. It was about 5 P.M. when we returned; we had thus spent eight or nine hours on horseback, under a sun the heat of which the thermometer registered as one hundred and thirty degrees.

Having made arrangements to visit Batcheserai and the field of Alma, we started for that purpose at 4 A.M. on the morning of the 30th July. We had taken the precaution of sending the ponies we were to ride, with a Tartar attendant, to the Severnaia, or north side of the harbour, saving thereby a detour of at least eight or nine versts. Crossing the harbour in a boat of the Russian Company, placed at our disposal by the kindness of Captain Skeriatein, a naval officer, who had witnessed the entire war in Sebastopol, we mounted our little nags at 5 A.M.

These ponies were neither goodlooking nor well equipped, but they proved much better than they looked, and, with the exception of the punishment inflicted by the miserable saddles, they carried us well. For the use of the two and our guide, for the two days, we paid twenty-three roubles, or about three guineas, and we were told we were fortunate in obtaining them for that sum.

Our way lay north to the Balbec River, thence three miles up

its course, we then joined the high road to Batcheserai. At the bridge, three miles up the Balbec, I recognised the turn in the road which we followed on marching from the Alma, and the road we took up the hill on the day previously to the flank march on Balaclava. Reaching the village of Devankoi, we found the ever-ready samovar, eggs, new milk, etc., etc. Following thence the high road made by Prince Waronzoff, we arrived at the Khan's Palace at Batcheserai at about 10 A.M.

To those who have no acquaintance with it, I must here give a short description of the samovar, as I shall have frequent occasions to allude to it, owing to its universal use in all parts of Russia. The samovar is a large brass urn, with a hollow tube down its centre, and a receptacle below for lighted charcoal, a few lumps of which are thrown in at the top, and the draught of air through the centre tube soon sets the lighted charcoal into a bright glow, causing the water to boil, and, with very slight attention, keeping it in a boiling state for hours; it is certainly superior to our urns with an iron heater, which do not retain the heat more than twenty minutes. I do not, however, consider it, except in point of economy, so nice as an urn kept heated by a spirit lamp.

Batcheserai, or the Palace Garden, is the most healthily-situated town in the Crimea, possessing the purest water in abundance; and I can readily understand the value set upon its possession by the former Tartar Khans. On presenting General Kotzebue's order, we were immediately supplied with handsome rooms highly furnished in Oriental style. The divans were covered with velvet cushions embroidered in gold; the walls were hung with silken tapestry and the ceilings painted in Arabesque patterns.

After a cheering Turkish bath, in the Oriental Hummum attached to the palace, and a refreshing mid-day siesta, rendered

the more agreeable by a long ride in the sun, and by the never-ceasing murmur of a fountain immediately under our windows, we were quite prepared for a breakfast furnished from a neighbouring Turkish restaurant. In the afternoon we visited the ancient halls, the mosque, the gardens and courts. It is most gratifying to see the care which is bestowed upon their preservation, and the elegant and correct style in which they are being redecorated where decayed by age. A full moon rose splendidly at night, while we were partaking, in the open air, of the hospitality of Colonel Chostak, the Governor of the Palace.

The account which Madame Chostak gave me of the war was most interesting. She said that on the fact being communicated to them of our landing at Old Fort, about twenty miles off, they were not in the least alarmed, feeling certain that within a week we should be overwhelmed. In a few days, however, our farther progress caused them some anxiety. Colonel Chostak was with the troops; and, fearing our advance on the town of Batcheserai, which was very probable, as it commanded the high road, Madame Chostak was advised to take refuge with her children in Sebastopol. She started in her carriage, laden with infants and household goods. She reached the Balbec at the point I alluded to, where the road from the Alma joins it. Here her carriage got entangled with country waggons flying from the villages now occupied by the allies. She demanded the reason of all this from a Russian officer, who answered her, "Return for God's sake while there is yet time to gain home. We have been entirely defeated in a great action on the Alma. Save yourself and your children by a timely retreat. The enemy are rapidly coming on, the roads are encumbered with vehicles, and you will be overwhelmed first by our flying army and secondly by the advancing enemy."

Poor lady! although seventeen years had passed, yet the

agony of that moment was as vivid in her mind as ever. By the immense exertions of her servants, they were enabled to clear the carts and to regain the road home; where, fortunately for her, though for two years so close to the scene of strife, and even within hearing of a prolonged fire of musketry, they were not actually visited by the enemy. But what a sad picture did she draw of Batcheserai during this period. The Palace was converted into an hospital, with beds for fourteen hundred patients. Houses in the town were allotted for six thousand wounded, and certainly not less than forty thousand Russian soldiers now rest in their graves in the immediate neighbourhood of this small Tartar town. What an amount of misery do these few words suggest!

On the next morning, our Tartars being late with our horses, we did not get fairly into our saddles before 4 A.M. We then cantered merrily over the turf, in the cool of the morning, for the field of the Alma. We passed first through the village of Assis, and, after a ride of about ten miles, we reached the banks of the Alma river, about a couple of miles above where the action took place.

Desiring to view the field from the very point upon which I had myself entered the action, we crossed the river to its northern bank, and rode over the plain until we arrived at the very spot on which the 1st Division were put into line. I here remembered that part of the field over which, in our advance, we drove before us great numbers of jerboa hares, or kangaroos in miniature. Many other circumstances, in each step of our advance towards the river, came to my mind as we passed over the very ground on which I had witnessed this terrible death struggle. I recognised easily one spot in which I escaped as by a miracle from being blown to pieces by a shell, and another where a round shot striking the ground rebounded about two feet over His

Royal Highness's cocked hat, as he was marching at the head of his Division.

I came upon the corner house where for a few moments I had rested preparatory to entering the vineyards with the Coldstream Guards, and calling to mind the point at which they had been so judiciously re-formed by His Royal Highness's orders, under cover of a peculiar rise in the southern bank of the river, preparatory to their steady advance up the glacis against the guns. The heights which the Highlanders mounted were on our left; and those taken by the French, under cover of the guns of the fleet, were on our extreme right.

We now rode forward up the gently rising ground until we arrived at the position occupied as a battery by the most advanced heavy guns of the Russians, and which on the day of the action I had entered with the Guards, capturing some heavy brass ordnance which the Russians in their retreat were forced to abandon. Farther mounting the hill, we halted where the 1st Division had formed into line after the action, and where our horse artillery had unlimbered and fired shell after shell into the retreating columns of the Russian army. Here I had seen the glow of pride, mingled with compassion, in the eyes of our noble Field Marshal after the action.

The sun was now terribly hot. We, however, had no resource but to press on for Sebastopol, distant about thirty versts, over the very ground on which we had followed up our beaten enemy. We thus passed the Katcha river, and again reached the Balbec; but, before reaching the outworks of Severnaia, we diverged from our course in order to visit the mausoleum just finished by Russia in honour of her illustrious defenders.

This I have previously alluded to as a building most solidly built, gorgeously decorated, and worthy of the nation who erected it. Outside the building, on a platform overlooking the

harbour, is a battery of English guns, captured in the Turkish redoubts on the morning of the battle of Balaclava, these were lent by us to the Turks. The graveyard, which is immediately below, is scrupulously kept, and tastefully laid out, with a handsome wall of white stone surrounding it. The first care, therefore, of the Russians has been to honour their dead. Sebastopol yet in ruins, the living are ill sheltered; but to the memory of the dead, the brave defenders of their country, the highest honours and the utmost respect has been accorded.

Turning again towards the Severnaia we rode over an open plain on which two Russian field batteries were at drill exercise. It was now just 12 at noon. The sun was scorchingly hot—at least at 130 degrees—but the activity of neither men nor horses appeared in the least relaxed, nor did they seem to suffer from it. The powers of endurance both of heat and cold in the Russian soldier is quite astonishing, and on numberless occasions has called forth my surprise. In 1855, the Cossacks of Tchernamousky, when on outpost duty in front of Kertch, slept during the entire winter in the open air. Yet so severe was the weather that we had nearly four feet of snow on the ground. The sea in the bay of Kertch was frozen so hard that we were landing forty-eight pounder guns on sledges, and the thermometer had descended to zero. Again, on the recent voyages which I have made on the Black Sea, the Don, and the Caspian, I have observed both officers and men, as well as passengers, voluntarily exposed to a most terrific sun all day, with no awning over their heads, and at night to the cold, sharp air of the pestiferous marshes, not only without complaint, but apparently as a matter of usual occurrence.

By half-past 12 we were again in Wetzel's Hotel, the white stones of the city, reflecting the sun, seemed to be extra heated to receive us. The thermometer in my room in the shade, and

looking north, at 5 P.M. was standing at 92, and at 6 the following morning at 90 degrees.

A refreshing dip in the sea in the afternoon, at the delightful bathing houses, re-invigorated us after our morning ride of forty-five versts under this tropical sun. The bathing at Sebastopol is quite perfect. Commodious houses are erected; the ladies' portion being, of course, separated from that of the men. Both are spacious, and give plenty of room for swimming without going into the harbour, which, however, is open to any one who desires it. The sea is deep and clear. Boys bring balls of curious blue clay, which they offer for a few pence. It is a sort of fuller's earth, and acts as soap. It is found in a seam, about a yard thick, in the hill side, near Inkerman, and is supposed to impart a softness and beauty to the skin, like the soft mud of the Nile and the Indus. That from the Nile is said to be sent to Constantinople in considerable quantities for the use of the ladies in the harems.

CHAPTER XXII.

KERTCH.

On the 1st August we again quitted Sebastopol, taking our passage in the Russian Company's steamship Mithridates. It was unfortunate that this ship should have fallen to our lot, as from her small size, and the dirt, discomfort, and bad feeding on board, she was universally considered one of the worst on the line, and with reason, as the sequel proved; for a great number of passengers were taken ill in the Sea of Azof, and amongst them the captain himself.

The passengers on board the vessel were, without exception, most agreeable, imparting information respecting the country very readily. Most of them spoke French, and many English also. They were mostly proceeding to Yalta or Theodosia for the summer bathing, and some few were going on to the Caucasus.

I was greatly indebted to Madame la Baronne Vorefsky for the information and advice she gave me respecting Tiflis and the Caucasus generally. This lady's husband had been employed against Shamyl, and had fallen at his final overthrow in Daghestan. Madame Vorefsky had accompanied him closely in these campaigns, and described them with an interest which I was able to realise when I visited the country subsequently.

We reached Yalta that afternoon. The vessel stopped for three hours, but we did not land. We reached Theodosia, for-

merly called Kaffa, the next morning at 7 o'clock. Kaffa is finely situated on the margin of the sea, and is yearly increasing in importance. In 1808 Dr. Clarke stated that it possessed only fifty families, and that the Russian soldiers were destroying the town, throwing down the minarets, and tearing down even the fountains, to obtain the lead for their muskets, which at that period each soldier in the army had to provide at his own cost.

Arrangements are very carefully made on board these vessels that the meals should take place during the time that the ships are in the harbours. By this they obtain two advantages. They save the dinners of all such passengers as desire to see these towns during the interval of two hours or so that the vessel remains, and they furnish no meals to either the incoming or the outgoing passengers. This mean economy is altogether unworthy of a great company, who are making already such excessive profits as to divide more than forty per cent. per annum on the original shares; but this company, being under the protection of the government, is, I presume, free from any censorship of the press.

One excellent invention is in use in all these vessels, as well as in those on the Don, the Volga, and the Caspian. A gigantic samovar stands on the deck, not far from the funnel. By means of the steam below, water is kept continually boiling in it, so that the everlasting calls of many hundred tea-pots are always answered. The lower class passengers invariably carry their own tea, sugar, and tea-pots, and these they put in requisition at all hours of the day. I believe a great deal of good might be done upon this principle at home, if a samovar were attached in some public place to a steam factory, with free liberty to any one in the street to bring their tea-pot. There is no habit which is more readily acquired than the use of weak tea, and I believe that a perfect facility of obtaining it hot and palatable would prove one of the most serious blows the gin-shop ever received.

If the idea was taken up by so philanthropic a man as Lord Shaftesbury, it might meet with some success.

About noon we came in sight of Kertch, the city of Mithridates, and at one o'clock we passed under the batteries of the fort, which we used to call St. Paul, but which now is called the Fort of Kertch. During the second year of the war, I had spent some months in the occupation of this station, and was acquainted with every yard of the country. All looked devoid of any change with the exception of the fort; but here a mighty work had for years been zealously carried on; and although in passing we could form but a very general idea of the works, yet they appeared most formidable. Batteries rose one above another, apparently mounted with very heavy guns, while immense ditches and covered ways seamed the face of the hill in every available direction.

The Circassian side of the channel being by nature shallow, had been improved by art, and many thousand tons of stone had been thrown in to make such an obstruction as to oblige vessels even of the lightest draught, entering or leaving the Sea of Azof, to pass immediately under the formidable batteries of the fort. A small harbour had also been excavated at the foot of the hill, and a lighthouse erected, apparently for the purpose of burning a lime-light, so that on the darkest night the exact position of any passing boat might be clearly shown to the gunners.

We rounded the point, and lay alongside the wharf. The town of Kertch appeared much the same as we had left it—the large quarantine buildings one heap of ruins.

We hired a carriage with the forlorn hope of seeing the fort, by paying our respects to the general in command. In approaching his residence we passed some of the numerous covered ways, and entered an outwork, which, although it was evidently extensively casemated, yet also contained, above ground, barracks for a very large number of soldiers and officers.

We were not at all surprised when we were informed that the general in command was not at home, and next that his adjutant had accompanied him, an answer which of course precluded us from the least chance of being permitted to see any of the inner works. We had, however, a very fair view of the outer works, which were very extensive, and most solidly built, consisting of deep ditches lined with casemated barracks deeply covered with earth. To each of these casemates were attached air-shafts. The batteries were not fully armed, nor the embrasures opened out; but long rows of guns were lying ready to be mounted, apparently Krupp's guns, of large calibre. Hundreds of artificers, such as masons and blacksmiths, were busy at work, and we could easily discover that this outwork, although so much labour was bestowed upon it, was as nothing to the inner works, which we could not enter. The entire hill appeared to have been burrowed into, and made one continued casemated barrack, and batteries placed at every available position for most powerful artillery.

The Fort of Kertch looks as if designed in war for a force of at least ten or twelve thousand men, and appears impregnable. The works on the land side are not in so forward a condition as those towards the sea; but, taught by the lesson they received at Sebastopol, they no longer neglect their land defences. I regretted that we could not see more of the interior of this fort, but we were indeed somewhat astonished that we had seen so much, enough to give us a very fair idea of what remained to be explored; and the more so, when we afterwards ascertained that we had actually seen more than our own Vice-Consul, to whom the opportunity of even entering the outer fortifications had never yet been accorded.

The Fort of Kertch has already cost Russia the yearly labour of two thousand men, many of them skilled artificers, for nine or

ten years, at an outlay of two and a half million of roubles yearly, that is, in all between three and four millions of pounds sterling. And now let us consider what are the objects of this formidable work and enormous expenditure. It is asserted that its only object is to secure the integrity of the Sea of Azof. This it probably will most effectually do; but looking to the coal mines now worked near Rostow, and the iron not far distant, I am inclined to believe that the possibility of securing the safety of an iron-clad constructing harbour at Kertch is not entirely lost sight of.

Should the Russians possess the control of the Black Sea, every result they may desire from this work will be gained; but if any other power possesses it, then Kertch, although it may secure the granaries of the Sea of Azof, can do little more in return for the powerful garrison of troops which it must keep inactive. Moreover, an enemy might effectually seal this fort from all aggressive movement by a line of torpedoes laid down across its entrance, and out of the range of fire from the fort: and thus, however impregnable itself, it could be rendered quite innocuous, and be compelled to waste its latent energies in forced inactivity. It is therefore really questionable whether a well-arranged system of torpedoes, at the entrance of the harbour, would not have been equally effectual, as the enormous works which they have erected at so great an expense and such immense labour.

There exists in England a wide-spread opinion that the time is not distant, when Russia will take the first favourable opportuity of attacking Turkey, and snatching that valuable and long-coveted prize, Constantinople; and that her first step towards this end will be the creation of a powerful fleet of ironclads in the Black Sea. If such is her secret determination, which is quite possible, as her counsels lie hid in the breast of one man, it will be long before she can carry it out, unless, as I before

said, she is permitted to procure those vessels elsewhere, and to pass them in through the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus; for it must be many years before she can hope to build in the Black Sea such ironclads as the Turks now possess anchored under Constantinople.

All the antecedents of the present Emperor indicate that he is not desirous of entering upon aggressive measures against Turkey, but that he is bent upon the development of his own country, in its trade and commerce and its railway communications; but small events may suddenly cause great changes in the sentiments and ideas of one man; and where the sole will of an autocrat guides the movements of a nation, such an alteration may at any moment cause an entire change of policy. The longer therefore the possession of these tempting engines of aggression in the Black Sea is delayed to Russia, the better for the peace of Europe; and it would in my opinion be most unwise for the Sultan to consent to their entry into the Black Sea through the Dardanelles and Bosphorus.

But almost while writing this sentence, I see it reported in the *Times* of the 9th of January, that "in compliance with a Russian request the Porte has announced its willingness to facilitate their passage through the Dardanelles, in case a desire to this effect is expressed by all the signatory powers of the Paris treaty." I may have formed erroneous opinions, or be badly instructed in the diplomacy of this subject, but I consider it purely suicidal on the part of Turkey to grant this permission.

The British Consul at Kertch appeared to deplore his fate in being cast into this corner of the Crimea, which he described in the most gloomy terms. He complained that a total estrangement from society was enforced upon him, his few attempts at cordiality being almost immediately met by a desire to borrow from him forty or fifty roubles; and as he was not a card player,

and could ill afford these requisitions on his slender allowances, he was compelled to lead a solitary and unsocial life.

We were not sorry to leave Kertch, more especially as the cholera had begun to show itself in the town in rather a virulent form, and therefore the least which we might expect would be a detention in quarantine wherever we went.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SEA OF AZOF.

On the afternoon of the 2nd August we left Kertch for Taganrog, situated on the northern corner of the Sea of Azof. We passed through the narrow straits of Yenikale, and by the town of that name. No military works appear to have been lately erected here, the fort being in the same state as when we relinquished it in 1856. Steaming on, we entered the shallow, turbid, muddy waters of the Sea of Azof. On the opposite coast is the town of Taman, which suffered severely during the Russian war. There are some very ancient tombs near at hand, in one of which a bracelet of pure gold was found of the snake pattern, precisely similar to those manufactured in India. Beyond Taman is the country of the Tchernymousky Cossacks, whose endurance and bravery we had so much occasion to admire in the Crimea.

This night's voyage proved one of the most disagreeable it was our fate to endure during our tour. It thundered, lightened, and poured with rain during the entire night, while the deck being dry, and the seams open, the water flooded our cabin, literally setting afloat what property we had left on the floor. With the greatest difficulty we obtained the assistance of the steward, who having in the morning resisted the entry of my portmanteau into the cabin, now seemed delighted that it

should be saturated with water and turned into a boat. But this was by no means the worst evil I had to endure, for, in common with many other passengers, I was attacked with choleraic symptoms, and I owe many thanks to a clever physician from Moscow, Dr. Kobiakoff, a chance traveller, who was good enough to attend me, and who very soon set me right again, and who resisted all my attempts to make him accept some fee or remuneration. He was, he said, on a tour of pleasure, and not on a professional one.

Early on the morning of the 3rd August, we reached Berdinskaia, a large corn emporium in the north of the Sea of Azof. Ships cannot approach nearer than five or six miles. This town will ere long be united by rail with Taganrog on the east, and with Simperopol on the west. The day throughout was most unpleasant—rainy and stormy, a very usual circumstance, I am told, in this sea.

By 7 P.M. we had reached Taganrog, but we had to proceed a considerable distance within the shipping before we made the quay. So shallow is the water opposite the city that not unfrequently persons can cross on foot to the opposite shore, nearly twenty versts distant.

We soon found ourselves lodged in an extraordinary sort of lodging-house, containing large corridors, from which were bunked off small compartments built in wood, each let by the night or week, and in which there was no furniture, except a plain wooden sofa, a table and a couple of chairs, with the free use of a large samovar ever ready in the passage. We now began to find how requisite it is, when travelling in Russia, to conform to the customs of the country, and to be provided with bedding, inconvenient as it is to be encumbered with baggage. With great difficulty we induced the proprietor to supply the deficiency.

We were now joined in our travels by a most charming companion, Viscount Figanière, the Portuguese ambassador at St. Petersburg, whose acquaintance we had made in the Crimea. He had resided for many years in England, and so perfectly does he speak our language, that it was impossible to detect that he was not a native of the north of England. Fortunately for us, he had also a considerable acquaintance with the Russian language. This, and his great kindness on all occasions of difficulty, obtained for us an exemption from much trouble and vexation during the time we had the pleasure of travelling in his society.

It was now requisite to recruit our finances, as no other opportunity of doing so would occur before reaching Tiflis. For this purpose I applied to Mr. Yeames, the correspondent of Messrs. Coutts in Taganrog. He received me very kindly, but to my surprise he told me that he was quite unacquainted with the usual method of cashing circular letters, as although he had been a merchant in Taganrog for twenty years, yet this was the first occasion upon which he had ever been requested to honour one of Coutts's circular letters. This circumstance shows how little this route is frequented by Englishmen.

There appeared to be a large amount of business going on in Taganrog; all, however, connected with the export of corn, the staple product of this country; and as this had been the most productive season which Russia has known for many years, the price of labour ranged comparatively high, the common field hands receiving three or four roubles, or between ten and twelve shillings per day, and in no part of the country that we had yet been in, did they receive less than eight. The profits to the corn-grower will be enormous this year, as the failure of the crops in Western Europe appears to have been commensurate with the abundance in the East. The farms are enormous in extent.

The name of one Russian gentleman was given to me, whose breadth of land under tillage this year was stated to be no less than forty thousand acres.

As a counterpoise to the large sum of money which, especially this winter, will have to be paid by England to Russia for bread-stuffs, it was satisfactory to see such an enormous collection of English-made agricultural machinery. Mr. Yeames's premises, although extensive, were unable to contain all that was sent to him. Here were rows of Ipswich-made steam engines and threshing and winnowing machines, and some hundreds of ploughs. This cannot but have the effect of cheapening the corn to the hard-working mechanic in England.

Before leaving Taganrog, we visited the house and the room in which Peter the Great died. A small chapel was fitted up in the chamber of death. The house was sacred to his memory—unused and unoccupied, preserved under the care of a pensioned old officer, exactly as it stood when he resided and died in it. It was interesting to reflect what immense progress this part of Southern Russia had made since the days of Peter the Great, both in extent and general advancement.

In the afternoon we passed by rail to Rostow, situated on the the river Don. It is a very old city, and the seat of a very considerable trade, which, in consequence of the recent opening of the coal mines, and the discovery of iron ore in the neighbourhood, as well as the general increase of agriculture near the banks of the Don, bids fair to become very much larger.

We were sorry we could not visit the town of Nova Circas, in which a large number of Tartars, originally fugitives from the Caucasus, are now located. They carry on an industry of working in ornaments of gold and silver, such as we afterwards saw in the height of its perfection in the mountains of

Daghestan. These people not long since discovered a curious and valuable gold crown, studded with precious stones, said to have been the crown of the Tartar Khan, who ruled over the country bordering the Don, before it was conquered and annexed by Peter the Great.

It now became necessary for us to determine our future movements. Our original intention was to visit Circassia and the Caucasus. I was most unwilling to be beaten off from it, and yet great difficulties presented themselves. When I mentioned in Constantinople that such was my intention, I was warned on all sides not to carry it into execution at this season. Even before we left London, experienced persons at the Foreign Office pointed out its great danger. Of the many evils held out to warn us the least was fever or ague in the marshy lands of Imeretia.

Finding it, therefore, undesirable to enter this dangerous land by the front and direct road, I was determined to beat about, and see if the enemy's flank could not be turned; and the sequel proved, by perfect success, that it could. Not only was this accomplished, but the route we took was in fact the best at this season, and gave us the opportunity of exploring a part of the country almost unknown to English travellers. And singularly enough, the season in which we travelled there, viz., September, proved the very best in the whole year for making this mountain expedition. We, however, had no means of discovering this beforehand. No books which we could procure in London gave us the least clue to it; for, in fact, the information on the Caucasus which has been as yet published is most meagre.

We were informed at Rostow that by taking a diligence (which, however, turned out to be no more than a springless covered waggon) we might reach Tiflis, via Stravapol and Vladicaveas, a journey of eight hundred and sixty-eight versts, over wild, open steppes, under a fierce sun. This was too much to

endure on a journey of pleasure. We therefore determined to adopt the plan of mounting the Don by steamer, crossing by a short railroad from Kalach to Tsaritzin, on the Volga, and then descending that river to Astrakhan. By taking a steamer from that point to Petrolvks or Derbende, about six or seven hundred versts on the Caspian, we might enter this apparently forbidden region from the east, as it appeared by general consent (at any rate at this season), impossible to do so from the west.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ON THE DON.

LATE in the evening of the 4th August we embarked in a small steamer on the River Don, sleeping that night, and many subsequent ones, on the couches in our clothes. We were aware that this being the driest season of the year there would be but little water in the Don, and that it was more than possible that we should be much delayed by the vessel continually grounding. But our voyage turned out more fortunate than any one in Taganrog or Rostow predicted.

At half-past 6 A.M., we started up the river. Fortunately there were no other first-class passengers beyond our party of three, during the entire voyage. This gave us the whole of a very large saloon cabin to ourselves, but we had nothing but this for sleeping, eating, washing, etc., etc. On our way up the Don we made every possible inquiry as to our progress beyond Astrakhan, but could obtain no information whatever on this subject.

The vessel was literally crammed with second, third, and fourth class passengers. The whole of the upper deck was given up to them. Near the funnel was the usual gigantic samovar attached to the deck, the centre of attraction at all hours; tea-pots all day long of every size, colour, quality, and substance being replenished from its capacious dimensions ever boiling hot. It is perfectly astonishing to observe how much and how long the Russians

will drink tea, and the dexterity with which they economise their sugar; breaking off a piece of convenient size they poise it in their mouths, and sweeten their tea by allowing it to run past the sugar. This custom must have some advantages, as it is universally practised. The sugar is generally of excellent quality, white and hard.

The villages on the river side were entirely built of wood, with the exception of the churches, which were either of brick or stone, and covered with iron, painted green. These villages must be not only very inflammable, but very expensive, as all the wood used on the Don, and a great deal on the Sea of Azof is, as I shall hereafter show, brought down the Volga.

Some of the passengers were rough-looking fellows, feeding themselves upon the coarsest food. The usual dress of the men was a loose pair of trousers and long boots, with a red cotton shirt over all, and a small leathern cap. It is by no means an ugly dress, and when in groups looks very picturesque. The women are dressed in a poor sort of European costume, thinly clad in cotton, and neither in dress nor in looks are they at all prepossessing.

As we ascended the river we continually saw large quantities of sturgeon and other fish landed by nets of great strength. The quantity of sturgeon said to be caught in this river is almost incredible. Marsh birds of all kinds, herons, pelicans, cormorants, ducks of every variety whirl and flap along the shore, and the osprey, or fishing eagle, was busy at his prey, while large flocks of tame geese with no apparent owner were quietly nibbling the grass on the margin. Occasionally a Don Cossack would suddenly present himself on the bank, mounted on a wiry ragged pony, sitting forward on the pummel of his saddle, so peculiar to the Easterns, and staring steadily at the vessel until it was out of sight; and here and there we saw the river guards encamped

in small and hastily built huts on the banks, who indicated, by circular painted wooden disks on long poles thrust into the sand at shallow places, the various changes which the shifting river had made in the depth of water. Although our boat was fully one hundred feet long, she only drew eighteen inches of water; yet we met with endless detentions from grounding on the shallows.

STUCK ON A SANDBANK UP THE DON.

Every evening as the day closed, we had to take precautions against the entry of musquitoes into the cabin, for if we neglected this until the candles were lighted, we knew well what we should suffer all the night. On board these boats an excellent plan was adopted, one which I have never seen elsewhere. To each window was fitted a frame, and stretched across it a piece of fine wire gauze, allowing the air to pass freely through, but effectually excluding the musquitoes.

At Constantina we changed the vessel for one somewhat smaller and of still lighter draught; but, nevertheless, we met with great delay from the shallowness of the water. By Monday evening we had only accomplished two hundred and forty-five versts out of the total distance of four hundred and ninety-five—from Rostow to Kalach. That night we spent on a sandbank near Trimlanskaia, and began to be alarmed lest we should finish the summer there. It was, therefore, very pleasing to see the good will with which the men worked to get the vessel off the bank; for hours and hours these men would toil under a most broiling sun, up to their waists in the water, hauling and hauling at the vessel, obeying with alacrity every word of the captain.

While on board this vessel we tried many of the wines of the Don, but both red and white were of the poorest quality, weak and rather acid; but they were not inferior to the Crimean wines, of which, although they are sometimes well spoken of, none of us had been fortunate enough to obtain a good sample in the Crimea. Our principal beverage, therefore, became tea, in the Russian style, very hot, very weak, and with a slice of lemon, which, after all, in a very hot climate, is perhaps the most refreshing beverage which can be taken, and it is singular how the taste and the habit grow upon any one who gives it a trial. At length on Wednesday morning we made fast to the wharf at Kalach. Here we left the river, and took the railway for the Volga.

I must here say a few words concerning those excellent and noble soldiers, the Don Cossacks, who have made such extensive settlements on the river. The whole of the vast steppe country bordering on the River Don has been colonised by the Don Cossacks, to whom very considerable privileges are accorded. To each soldier and his family an area of ninety acres of land is granted; for this he pays no rent, but his obligation is to serve

fifteen years free of pay, out of which three years must be spent in St. Petersburg, in His Imperial Majesty's Guard. The officers, in like manner, receive their portion of land, but, of course, to a much greater extent. To general officers three thousand acres are allotted. Soldiers are not permitted to sell their land, but when absent or on service, it is tilled by the members of the family who remain in the settlement. Each officer and each soldier is obliged to find his own horse, but an extra compensation is granted to officers for this purpose.

There are now settled in the vicinity of the Don about eighty thousand Cossacks in villages and settlements at short distances from each other. This number includes thirty batteries of artillery of eight guns each. These military colonists render excellent service to the empire, and a double benefit is derived: first, that they bring a boundless steppe into cultivation, and secondly, their military service is almost free of cost. They are a very fine body of men, rigidly obedient, full of love for their Tsar and Russia, hardy, and able to endure heat and cold to an almost incredible degree, excellent horsemen, active, intelligent, and trustworthy.

CHAPTER XXV.

ON THE VOLGA.

THE railway station at Kalach stands immediately above the landing place from the steamers. We took our places for Tsaritzin, starting at 9 A.M.

One of the principal objects of the construction of the railway from Kalach to Tsaritzin, connecting the Volga with the Don, was the transport of the pine timber, which grows in such profusion on the upper part of the Volga, to the Don and the shores of the Sea of Azof, where there is literally none. Enormous quantities of wood, brought down the Volga in rafts, are put upon this railroad at Tsaritzin, and on their arrival at Kalach are again built into smaller rafts, fitted for the Don.

The distance between these rivers I do not think exceeds fifty miles, and at 2 P.M. we arrived at Tsaritzin, a wild straggling town of little better than wooden shanties, the roads through which were rough and irregular. Here we came upon the noble Volga, a magnificent river, which, even at this season of low water, was at least a mile and a half broad. On the opposite bank there appeared a fringe of wood some miles deep, and then, again, the endless steppes of Russia.

The trade on the Volga by steamers is extensive. The engines are entirely fed with wood, of which there were on the bank numberless acres of logs ready cut and piled up some ten feet

high, and companies of women, somewhat rough in manners, were ready in waiting for the steamers, to run it on board by means of wooden bearers held between two of them. This river is said to swarm with fish of innumerable descriptions; but we were warned to be most cautious not to eat any of them, as it was said that on eating them, especially if followed by drinking water, an attack of cholera was quite sure to follow.

A steamer was due at 4 o'clock. They only wait for a few minutes, to exchange passengers and a small amount of cargo, during which interval they take in as much wood as the female company of bearers can place on board. We had to wait four hours; but the accounts in the guide-books of the Volga steamers led us to expect to be fully repaid by the comfort, convenience, and grandeur of these vessels. At 7 P.M. the steamer presented herself; but great was our disappointment, when, instead of cleanliness, good cabins, and tolerable fare, all turned out to be squalid, rude, and uncivilised.

The real truth is, Russia has not yet donned the garb of civilisation—as we accept the term. In its immense population there may be thirty or forty thousand persons who have travelled, are highly polished, and thoroughly understand the signification of this term; but the mass have no conception of the meaning of the word comfort, or what we consider the necessary conditions of an easy existence. I sat down in the pent-up hot cabin, which, with the exception of one small window near the roof, about twelve inches square, had no light; and I began to wonder how I could have left all the comforts of home to be freely seeking so many disagreeables here, to have encountered all the pains, trouble, fatigue, and expense to find myself in such a situation.

The entire deck was, as usual, crowded with second, third, and fourth class passengers, or with cargo. The awning on the bridge was so poor and thin it was but a sun trap. No cabin

was more than six feet by five. There was no saloon at all—and the smell—oh! oh! Moreover, I was by no means cured of the symptoms from which I had suffered on the sea of Azof, and they were evidently returning. We spent all that night and the greater portion of the next day in great discomfort. The food which, with difficulty, we obtained at all, equalled, in all respects, the accommodation. It is fair, however, to say, that in the hard days and nights which we underwent subsequently in our tour, none were of so disagreeable a character as this.

About 3 P.M. we passed the residence of Prince Tumeen and a very large Mongolian temple. This tribe of Mongolian Tartars own a very large tract on the west side of the Volga, about two hundred miles square, and reaching down to Astrakhan. It is said that they came into this country as settlers about one hundred years since, being then given the wild tract above alluded to, portions of which they have carefully cultivated and improved. Indeed, not long since, when the Government paid an indemnity on emancipating the serfs, Tumeen received one hundred thousand roubles; and if, as it is said, his yearly rents are about equal to the same sum, this Kalmuck chief must be considered excessively rich.

The Kalmucks living on the side of the river appeared wretched enough. Their houses consist of a few sticks covered with coarse canvas, which, on the rising of the river in the spring, they are compelled to put into their rude boats, and remove into the inner country. Although these people are in a very humble position, yet for food they seem not to be so badly off. In the summer they catch an endless quantity of fish, and in the winter they eat horses, and dogs, in addition to anything else they can obtain. They drink large quantities of brick tea, softened by some mare's milk, of which they are particularly fond.

At about 8 P.M. of the 10th of August we arrived at the

city of Astrakhan. The guide-books recommended to us the Hôtel Russie. Having, with immense difficulty, got our traps into some tiny droskys, literally in size no bigger than the little carts sometimes seen in country towns drawn by dogs, we started off through the town in search of that hotel. The night was very dark, and our stock of Russian small. After a long and fruitless search, we decided that our better course would be to drive to the palace of the Governor, and ask advice as to the most fitting place to put up at. We were here recommended to proceed to a sort of hotel lodging-house, called the Hôtel Matchaloff, with which a subsequent residence of some days' duration made us very contented. At any rate we rested assured that it was the best hotel in Astrakhan; and, moreover, that no such hotel as the Hôtel Russie existed at all. I may mention the prices at the Hôtel Matchaloff as showing how reasonable the living in Astrakhan is. For three meals per day, including rooms and attendance, the charge was only eight shillings each, exclusive of wine.

On Monday the 14th of August we much regretted that we were to part company with Viscount Figanière. In him we had found a most charming companion for nearly a fortnight. Unfortunately he had made engagements in the north of Russia, near Nijni Novgorod, and therefore was obliged to proceed up the river Volga to that city. It moreover happened to be the period of the great fair which is annually held there, one of the most interesting things of its kind in Europe, but which, in consequence of the new system of railroads and other modern changes, is beginning to dwindle in its proportions and interests.

Viscount Figanière embarked in a large river steamer called the Alexander the Second, built in three decks after the model of one of the Mississippi boats. The Russians universally considered her perfection; but whether for size, build, or fittings,

she would be considered but a very third-rate affair in America. He was to take about seven or eight days on his voyage to Nijni Novgorod. The passage money, exclusive of table, was thirty-five roubles, or less than five pounds; and the table expenses, exclusive of wine, might be set down at about three roubles, or eight shillings, per day. A return voyage on the Volga, from Nijni Novgorod down the stream to Astrakhan, will generally take about five days. I mention these points, as they may prove useful information.

It will now be my province to give some account of the city of Astrakhan; but as I had a great many business letters to write at this time, I requested my son to help me, and this he has done in the following brief account.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ASTRAKHAN.

THE city of Astrakhan stands upon an island surrounded by the waters of the Volga. It is dusty in summer, windy in autumn, frozen up in winter, and knee-deep in mud in spring. There are no trees, no pleasant fountains, and no pavements to the wide rugged roads. The houses are mostly built of wood, there being but a very few of stone.

One point in Russia that especially strikes the stranger is that everything is commenced on a large and pretentious scale, and then badly carried out and half finished. All Russian towns cover an enormous extent of ground, imperfectly filled. Russian gardens are frequently wild parks. Russian rooms too frequently are large barns, and, indeed, I think that Russians generally lay out plans too vast and too grand for their powers of execution. Again, Russia is spreading over a vast territory, and wasting force which might be spent in improvements at home. She is laying, it is true, the framework of a mighty monarchy; but when the building will be covered in, no one can foretell. Her empire would be far more formidable if of half the size and better developed.

In this rambling, dusty, wooden city there are sixty thousand inhabitants, of which not ten thousand are Russians. The rest of the population of Astrakhan is very various; there are Tartars,

Persians, Armenians, Kalmucks, a few Kirghis, etc., etc. Thus there are many religious persuasions, such as Roman Catholics, Protestants, Lutherans, Greeks, Armenians, Mahometans, and Buddhists.

It must not be expected that the houses are all neat and tidy; they are of good size, but covered with remnants of old paint, and with broken wooden ornaments, boards patched on to mend chinks, and over all a sprinkling, or rather coating, of white dust. A peculiarity exists which deserves notice. In each room in every Russian house is invariably placed a picture of the Virgin Mary and Infant Saviour; these vary in value of framing, in painting and ornament, according to the wealth of the owner. Sometimes they are exceedingly rich in gilding, and even in jewels.

A family can be supported very fairly for twenty pounds per annum in Astrakhan, and the lower class for much less, for they are contented to eat some black bread and fruits; a large water melon, one foot in diameter, costs but one penny; or, perhaps, they will eat cucumbers, either fresh or pickled in salt, with a little bread. Caviare is considered a treat; it is eaten spread on bread; and in the winter season they eat salted fish, dried hard in the sun, which is first steeped in water, and then boiled. Caviare is the roe of the sturgeon; when fresh, it may be eaten raw, with salt, just as it comes from the fish. Should you close your eyes, you may imagine you were eating a raw egg; but it is usually eaten when it has been smoked. Great quantities are sent from Astrakhan into Russia.

The Volga is full of fish. It is a noble river, as it flows, with its strong steady current, through flat lands to the sea, sometimes a mile wide, sometimes two, but always silent, steady, and strong. As it nears Astrakhan, it divides itself out, and leaves huge islands, covered with reeds, seldom inhabited by man, but

the abode of flocks of wild fowl, and, I may add, swarms of musquitoes. Pelicans fish by the lonely stream. The wild osprey, or fishing eagle, wheels round over it, looking down with eager keen glances into the waters. The Volga flows into the Caspian Sea by sixty mouths occupying a space of one hundred and sixty miles, and forming more than three times that number of islands at its mouth.

MOONLIGHT, ASTRAKHAN.

The sights of Astrakhan are few. The most notable is the Cremlin, or fort, built in 1550. Within the wall is a cathedral, built in 1700, apparently upon principles of architecture peculiar to itself. Opinions must differ whether either the exterior or the interior may be called handsome. A gold screen, the repairs of which lately cost 4500*l.*, hides the altar. We were shown the precious jewels, said to be worth 100,000*l.*, and among them four mitres, varying in value from 5000*l.* to 25,000*l.*; also

croziers of gold, amulets, miniatures, cups set with jewels, and precious old manuscript books, bound in gold covers set with diamonds. Baron Humboldt, when he came to Astrakhan, helped them to value their treasures. The inner sanctuary is miserably painted, and no woman is permitted to enter there. The priests were very poorly and plainly dressed.

The next thing we went to see was the old Admiralty House, in which are two boats, each about thirty feet long, built under the direction, and partly by the hands, of Russia's greatest emperor—Peter. By the side of the boats are the rude tools, with greasy handles, which formed Peter the Great's own work-basket, just as he left them. The boats are well made; the planks are pinned together with wood, somewhat ornamented, but a little wanting in finish.

A considerable space of ground has been given up as arsenal ground, and formerly large stores of all kinds were housed here; but, in consequence of the diminution of water in the mouths of the Volga, it has been found requisite to change the entire site of the Caspian Naval Arsenal. Bakou has been selected; its position is central; and, in all probability, ere very long it will be in communication, by rail, with Tiflis, as well as Derbent and Rostow, and thus with Nicolaef and Odessa, and with the Sea of Azof.

The bazaar in Astrakhan is rather poor, principally consisting of shops and stores kept by Persians. These are great extortioners. The prices which they asked us for some Persian rugs and common turquoises exceeded those at which they could be purchased in Bond Street.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE KALMUCK SETTLEMENT.

THE two following days were perhaps as interesting as any we spent in the south of Russia.

We paid our respects to General Kostenkoff, who has been placed in command of the Kalmucks, under the title of Guardian-in-Chief of them and their country. We asked permission of him to visit one of their settlements, situated on the other side of the river, about six miles distant. I cannot express how kind General Kostenkoff was to us, and although ill with the malarious fever, so common in this country, especially in this month, he entertained us with a long account of his Mongolian subjects, showing the greatest interest in them. We found him hard at work for their benefit. He had given great attention to the study of their difficult language; had written a grammar of it; had taken sketches of the country; had obtained an excellent survey of it; had taken many interesting photographs of the people and of their tents, houses of worship, etc., and was translating the Bible into their tongue. I understood that about one hundred of them had already been converted to Christianity.

General Kostenkoff gave directions that we should have every facility in visiting the settlement alluded to, sending orders that all should be in readiness to receive us—more especially as a

person of such distinction as the Portuguese ambassador at their Court was to head our party.

On the following afternoon, therefore, we left the hotel in the diminutive droskys before spoken of, and drove down to the river; there we found a small ferry boat, into which we soon lifted our carriages, ponies and all, and crossed over the river, which was here about three quarters of a mile broad. We then started off at a good pace for the encampment. We passed some villages, in which the settlers were Mussulmans, who did not seem well off, but we heard that these men kept a vast number of horses, trained to draw a sort of Maltese cart, in which they carry such articles as are required by the inhabitants of the vast plain country which forms the Cis-Caucasus, such as tea, sugar, cloths of all kinds, and in fact everything which they cannot manufacture.

Entering the Mongolian settlement about 4 P.M., we were met by the Russian official who has immediate command of it, accompanied by a vast crowd of Kalmucks, who were dressed in their smartest costumes to receive us. These Mongolian Kalmucks are a wild nomad tribe, but are partly settled in villages. They live in most ingeniously-constructed huts made of lattice-work, which folds up into a very compact form for easier carriage. When placed in its position, about four pieces form a circle, fully fifteen feet in diameter; the walls of the tent are about four feet six inches high; this is surmounted by a sort of crinoline, which is then covered by thick felt lashed down with a strong elastic cord made of camel's hair.

Marco Polo, in relating his travels, speaks of the Mongolian Tartars as using exactly the same description of tent, which they removed upon strong carriages with a train of bullocks. Colonel Yule gives in his edition a correct drawing of this tent. The fire burns in the centre of the tent, and the smoke escapes from a

hole in the centre of the roof. Beds with small musquito curtains are placed round the tent, and also the domestic utensils, such as a large flat wooden trough for washing purposes, a wooden tea-pot like a pail, about eighteen inches high and six across, cups of wood turned, and bowls of metal.

We were invited into one of these abodes, and small stools given us to sit upon. A large company of women were sitting in a row round the greater portion of the outer circle of the tent. An elderly lady performed on a sort of guitar. She squatted herself on the ground, and caused a number of girls to sit round her. Apparently she struck the notes quite at random; the girls sang a long low chant, and then the young girls and men danced. The guitar, made of deal, was shaped like an ancient lute. It had two catgut strings, tuned one an octave above the other; the scale was divided into five notes, and both the strings were struck together. The dancers put their heads on one side, and moved them about with a sort of toss, looking as conceited as possible; then they waved their arms about, and swayed their bodies at the same time, taking short strutting steps. It is difficult to give an exact description of the dancing of these dwarfish people, but it much resembled that of absurdly conceited children —waving their arms, and turning before a looking-glass, to admire their new dresses.

These Kalmucks were dressed in very bright colours. The men shave their heads, the women plait their long, coarse black hair into pigtails, and many of them wear a cap, which in shape and colour resembles that of the 16th Lancers. A silver bangle or two ornament their somewhat dirty arms and wrists, and they generally wear neither shoes nor stockings. The women are far fewer in numbers than the men, the whole tribe being supposed to number about one hundred and twenty thousand, of whom about forty thousand are women. The result is, that the whole

race is diminishing and dying out, but whether infanticide is here practised as in China, I could not ascertain, and probably, if it were so formerly, it is now suppressed. The care and circumspection used in regard to these people would certainly prevent the crime.

Some time since, the Russians built a few houses for these people, but having tried the new abodes, the Kalmucks took counsel, and when the winter came on they burnt the furniture for firewood, and then retired to live in their own warm huts, stabling their cattle and horses in the wooden houses. Nor do I in the least wonder at this, for the huts are the most commodious and the most comfortable I have ever seen, and fulfil all the conditions desirable for a nomad race. So high is the opinion formed of these huts by the Russian Government, that they have already adopted them to some extent for their troops in their far eastern campaigns, and with the very best results. Had we possessed hut-tents of this kind in the Crimean war, it would have saved much of the misery endured by our army during the first winter of our occupation.

We were very curious to know if they could be readily packed for a march, and on our expressing a desire to see this done, two dromedaries, with their slow gait and cross-looking faces, were at once brought forward. They were made to lie down, uttering the curious cry which they always do on such occasions. The family to whom the tent belonged, were alone allowed to perform the process of taking it down and packing it. In a very short time the roof was stripped, the felt folded up, the light roof was then released from the walls, in four pieces, which were shut up after the fashion of umbrellas devoid of their silk. The walls then collapsed, exactly the same as the cross-bar woodwork which fits so prettily round flower-pots, and in a very short time—in less than twenty minutes—the entire tent, with all its contents, was packed on the camels' backs. The lady to whom it belonged

then jumped cross-legged on a wiry little horse and rode off, leading the two camels by a strong hair rope. She rode extremely well, and went at least six miles an hour, round and round the encampment, nothing being shaken or displaced.

Having served a considerable time in Canada, and travelled much in the west of America, I may observe that I never saw a tent-hut so well adapted as this in all points—either for a sporting or military expedition—possessing, as it does, the properties of easy transport, great warmth, plenty of space, and astonishing durability.

During the musical entertainment, our Kalmuck host offered us refreshment, which consisted of tea made from the brick tea, which is sent in this form from China. It is made from the refuse leaves and stalks of the plant, mixed with sheeps' blood and then compressed into slab-like bricks. These are frequently used in money payment for various articles. This tea is served up rather weak and lukewarm, and is flavoured with mare's milk somewhat salted. With all our desire to be polite and amiable, we could not bring ourselves to swallow this compound after having tasted it. They also use a spirit called Koumiss, a sort of brandy made by fermentation from the milk of their mares. Many persons not of this race are excessively partial to this liquor, which also possesses the advantage of being able to be dried, in which state it can be carried very readily on a journey, and be dissolved when required for use; in short, it is a sort of very highly-condensed milk.

Next they brought a troop of horses on the ground, and mounting them, set off at a tremendous gallop, right through the settlement, regardless of whom, or what might be in their way. It was a curious sight to see these wild fellows dashing at headlong speed, their dresses flying in the air, and shouting with wild cries as they struggled to be foremost. The Kalmucks are won-

derful horsemen, and especially remarkable for their great endurance. It is said that it is not at all uncommon for them to continue the daily habit of riding until they are past eighty years of age, or indeed up to ninety.

In order to show us more of their customs, they paraded some combatants for wrestling. These were dressed in stout canvas drawers reaching to the knee. Having walked round once or twice, watching each other with a wary look from beneath their eyebrows, they crouched down, with bent neck and protruded chin, waiting their opportunity. Quick as lightning they suddenly darted in, each seizing the other with his right hand round his adversary's neck, and with the left firmly grasping the lower part of his drawers. Then a struggle of sheer strength began. At the end of about two minutes one was thrown, and both lost their temper. By Kalmuck custom the victor would have the right to kill his vanquished adversary, but this, of course, is not sanctioned here, and they were separated, being, we were told, watched for some time, until their angry blood had time to cool.

The Kalmucks generally are very stupid, but some of them are not bad workmen. Any young man who evinces more than ordinary capacity is sent to the university. Some of the lowest of this race show signs of skin diseases—such as leprosy—and are covered with festers. This is caused by their cleaning out the intestines of fish with their fingers, and being too idle to wash them afterwards.

Now came a very interesting sight—the religious arrangements.

Entering a wooden enclosure we saw the priest's hut, made in the same pattern and of the same materials as the tents already described, but with richer mats on the walls, and more valuable carpets on the ground. In the centre of the hut was a small table upon which were placed a wooden tea-pot, a candlestick, and some spoons, cups, etc., etc. At the back of the tent, a box,

covered with Persian carpets, supported a little painted cupboard, with folding doors in front, in which was placed a small, rough, hideous wooden doll, clothed in a long, hideous, silk cloak. Alas! this was the idol which the Llama, or priest of the village, worshipped many times in the day. A little offering of Mongolian brick tea and a small cup of beans stood before the hideous little god, and a little silver lotus flower hang in front of him.

We went on towards the temple. It was whitewashed, the windows and roof, however, being painted green. It was built in stories, just in the Chinese fashion, and ornamented with work carved in wood, painted in bright colours. On entering we found a low ante-room, with a carpet up the centre, on each side of which squatted five boys dressed in gaudy yellow calico dresses. This was the choir. The Llama, or priest, was at the upper end, nearest to the inner chapel. He had a curious painted brass crown on his head, and in his hand a pair of brass cymbals. There were two men with silver flageolets, three with polished sea shells, two with silver-mounted copper trumpets, each eight feet long, the mouths of which were supported on small tripods, and two with drums placed vertically on stands, and struck with a long, curved, elastic drumstick.

On our entrance they all played away together as hard as they could, and made an awful noise. This was succeeded by a chant in a low voice from the priest, and at the conclusion of each sentence he clapped his cymbals; whereupon the drummers banged on their drums, and sometimes the shells were blown again. We were informed that this was a prayer for the Czar specially, and for all kings and sovereigns in general. After this they wound up with a tremendous blowing of trumpets and shells, and banging of drums, cymbals, etc.

We then minutely inspected the temple. A table in the centre, arranged with a clean white cloth, was covered with various

objects. There were seven gods here in all. Each on that table had a little umbrella, a little silver pot of silver lotus flowers, a little cup of beans and a little cup of tea, and round the table were arranged curious little silk flags, a beautiful embroidered canopy hanging over all. At one end of this inner temple, on a box covered with a silk embroidered cloth, stood a high cupboard divided into six pigeon-holes, in each of which sat a brass gilt god. Each had a small yellow coat, and before each were offerings of tea and grain. A lamp continually burnt before these deities, and the odour of perfumed pastilles went up to gratify them.

Round the walls were pictures of different gods, such as of War, Medicine, Wealth, etc., and some were hideous, some smiling, and all allegorically painted as sitting upon the emblematic lotus flower. A prayer-wheel stood on each side of the door; these were wooden drums, about one foot in diameter and one foot long. They were made to revolve vertically by a leather strap and a crank, and appeared to be well worn from frequent use. Prayers were carved around them, and each spin of that wheel said four prayers. Thus a vast amount of devotional exercise was gone through without much labour.

I will not pretend to give an account of their religion, for Buddhism is well known; but I may mention that they have a most secret calendar (which, however, was shown to us) indicating their lucky and unlucky days.

Their dead they either burn, or expose upon the barren steppes, or throw into the River Volga; but this last method is forbidden by the Russian Government. Some few they bury. They prefer the plan of burning, but, as it is the more expensive, it is not so frequently practised. When it is, the ashes are carefully preserved in a little box like a snuff-box.

The ordinances of the church are kept in books, in a kind of

Mongolian writing that none but the Llamas understand. We were told that these people have completely lost the clue to their religion, so that they have not the remotest idea of the meaning of what they do. They regularly pay their little contribution to the church, and they come outside the temple, and worship, bowing their foreheads to the earth. This they do by long habit; but they know no reason for the act.

Thus we spent a most interesting day, and had seen what few suppose to exist in Europe, namely, a settlement of Buddhists retaining their strange religion. My son was so interested that next day he returned with a young Armenian gentleman, well acquainted with the Russian language, and made some sketches of their temple, their tents, etc. When he had finished, the Kalmuck head of the village came forward, and requested to see them. Some he held upside down, pretending to understand them. Both himself and his friends, however, were especially delighted at, and perfectly understood, the sketch of their chief god. They then formed a circle round the party, and made a very pretty speech, which the Armenian gentleman translated, and in which they informed my son that they considered him an artist of no mean merit. Poor people—they are harmless and inoffensive, so much so that they even consider it a crime to kill a flea! Their weak race is fast dying out, and after them there will no longer be an idol temple in Europe.

I may here mention that the young Armenian gentleman who accompanied my son, was not considered in this country a very extraordinary linguist, and yet, although he was but twenty years of age, he was acquainted perfectly with Armenian, Russian, and German, fairly with English and French, and moderately with Italian, Persian, and Turkish. He belonged to a university in St. Petersburg.

The facility of acquiring languages possessed by almost every

gentleman in these countries (a facility so useful where, as in the mountains of the Caucasus and on the borders of the Black Sea, many languages and dialects exist) seems to have descended from the most ancient times; for it is related of Mithridates that he was able to converse with the ambassadors of no less than twenty-two foreign countries. This is only to be surpassed by the case of Cardinal Mezzofanti, whom many years since I had the honour of meeting in Rome, and who was said to be capable of conversing in thirty-six languages.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ASTRAKHAN.

Our return was late at night, and at so advanced an hour we might have had some difficulty in getting across the river, but General Kostenkoff had kindly directed that the steamer should be kept waiting at our disposal. This was one of the many occasions, on which we experienced the civility of high Russian officials in the far East.

On our landing, the watchmen in the streets stood with long poles in one hand, while with the other they waved quickly a small wooden bat, a stone being tied to a string fixed on it, so as to strike each side of it alternately. With this primitive rattle they made a surprising noise. A few men singing and reeling under the influence of vodka, or corn brandy (the usual liquor drunk by the common people), staggered home, but otherwise the ill-lighted streets were almost empty. We took some tea, and were bold enough to eat some fish, which we were assured was "horosha," or very good, and after that, we rolled ourselves in our blankets and slept soundly.

While in the town, we inquired if there were here any merchants from Hindostan, and were told that there had been formerly, but about six years since the last had left. The fact is, that formerly the trade between the south of Russia and India was carried on overland through Persia, but owing to the

maladministration of that route and the great facilities afforded by the way of the Red Sea, all Indian produce is more easily and more cheaply procured in Russia by the latter route, or by way of England, than by Persia and the Caspian.

We visited one of the fire-alarm towers, being taken there by the Governor of the city, a young man of great intelligence. He gave us an immense deal of information, not only regarding the Volga and the Caspian, but also respecting the mountains of the Caucasus and Daghestan, and it was from him that we received the idea of penetrating that interesting country, hitherto almost unknown to English travellers. For this and for his great kindness and courtesy we owe him many thanks.

His description of the Salt lakes, at some distance from the city, was very interesting, and made me regret that we were unable to visit them. Large salt blocks lie at the bottom of the lake, and are taken out intact and ready for use. Incredible quantities are used for curing the sturgeon and other fish caught in the Volga and the Caspian Sea, and the annual revenue derived by the Government from the lakes, was represented at about two millions of roubles, or nearly three hundred thousand pounds sterling.

Before leaving Astrakhan, I must mention the curious love the inhabitants have for a tiny bird called by them a "squerrett." It is a bird of passage, wintering they say in Persia. It sings beautifully, but they do not shut it up in cages as we should do, but in every yard, on the top of a long pole, is erected a little house, which I discovered to be placed there purposely for the abode of the squerrett during his sojourn in South Russia.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE CASPIAN SEA.

On Tuesday morning, the 15th of August, we left the Hôtel Matchloff on our way to the Caucasus. At the wharf, by the river side, a very handsome wooden arch was being erected for the Emperor to pass under when embarking for the Caspian Sea. I may mention that the Emperor Alexander had determined to visit this year his possessions in the Caucasus, attended by one or two of his sons. It was his intention to arrive at Astrakhan at the beginning of September, and to proceed by the Caspian Sea to Petrolvks, from thence to visit the lofty mountains of Daghestan, and passing through the Pass of Dariel, to visit his city of Tiflis, and from thence by the new railway to Poti; then embarking for Yalta, in the Crimea, to spend a few quiet weeks at the Empress's beautiful country palace of Lavadia and his own more splendid one of Orianda.

At noon we embarked for the Caspian Sea, on board a comfortable barge, which was exceedingly clean, with good and civil attendants, and excellent meals at reasonable prices. Having been especially advised by several Russian gentlemen on no account to travel without a pillow, we purchased at the bazaar, before we started, two pillows of good size, and filled with the softest eider-down feathers, for the sum of twenty-three shillings.

The journey we were about to make was by the Russians considered a very hard one. Our project was to go by steam to Petrolvks; thence, if possible by Daghestan, to the Dariel Pass; to visit Elbrutz, and probably the mineral watering-place of Petigorze; then to Tiflis, and, if we had time, to go further south, before our embarkation at Poti, from whence we should return home by Odessa or Constantinople, as circumstances might point out. The posting would probably be between eight and nine hundred versts on rough roads, and, no doubt, in carriages without springs; and for the commissariat we should have to depend very much upon our own ingenuity and providence. We therefore laid in a supply of tea, sugar, biscuits, brandy, rice, barley, chocolate, etc., etc.; and with a small cooking apparatus, which we had already proved in the Crimea, we hoped to do very well. We were told that all we should obtain for days would be black bread, eggs, and milk, and that we should be compelled to use our diligence in purchasing fowls or meat wherever opportunities presented themselves; and so it proved.

Our knowledge of the Russian language was slender indeed; but with a slight amount of Turkish, and with a general knowledge of travelling in wild countries, we felt no doubt whatever of being perfectly successful in our journey, although unaccompanied by an interpreter.

On board the barge we made acquaintance with a most delightful person, Colonel Michailoff, commanding the 21st Brigade Imperial Artillery, who spared himself no pains to give us a complete posting route, and advised us as to the best road we should take in order to see the most interesting part of Daghestan.

At 8 P.M. we left the wharf, towed by a very weak and groaning tug-boat; and then the only two Englishmen in

Astrakhan departed. Tea-drinking and supper-eating was the order of the evening, for the Russians say when we have nothing to do it is best to eat and enjoy ourselves. A happy party of ladies were smoking their cigarettes very comfortably in the small deck saloon. We had a large number of deck passengers, particularly some Persian merchants, who were very nice people. One of them, who was just starting on a journey of a thousand miles, sat barefooted on a fine Persian mat on deck, smoking a pipe about a foot long; a large bundle of clothes was behind him, tied up in a Turkey mat with cord. Near him was a Persian bag, eighteen inches square, containing his tobacco-pouch and other necessaries. Above his head a handsome wooden cage contained his canary bird. A store of six melons, a basin of water and a jug, a piece of soap and a towel, completed his baggage. His bed consisted of a thin mattrass covered with leather, and beside him lay a large, very soft, feather pillow. He was very civil when addressed, and ended a short conversation, which I may observe was carried on in dumb show, by making me a present of some very excellent tobacco. He was a second-class passenger, but, nevertheless, was evidently a wealthy Persian merchant. We were much struck by his method of enticing his canary to sing, which consisted in scratching a key under its cage against the back of a knife. This method may be worthy of trial with our birds; with the Persian it was perfectly successful.

At Astrakhan the Volga is two miles wide, and very deep. It must be the largest river in Europe, and the volume of water appeared to me greater than that of the Mississippi. From Astrakhan it must be about forty miles to the Caspian Sea, and this distance is yearly increasing owing to the alluvial deposit brought down from the upper country.

The Volga has at its sixty mouths two or three hundred islands,

in which the reedy marshes are inhabited by millions of wild fowl, pelicans, swans, herons, and ducks innumerable; millions of musquitoes, also, as I can certify, from having foolishly left my cabin windows open when I had a lighted candle in my room. Oh, how I got punished for this! Regardless of the smothering heat, therefore, I covered my hands in a pair of socks, and my head in a napkin, and did my best to defy them.

On the morning of the 16th August we arrived at Berutshia Kassar, the Wolf's peninsula, so called by the Tartars and Kalmucks, who also surname it "Pocket-your-things," on account of the exactions of the Russian custom-house officers. Here some passengers disembarked; amongst others a lady, who was superbly dressed in white cashmere beautifully worked. I felt that she was wise to wear her smart dress, even on board this dirty steamer; for as she was about to inhabit one of these sandy islands at the mouth of the Volga, this was the last time, perhaps, for some years, in which her beautiful clothes could be seen by her own class in life, or admired by any but the wild Tartars and Kerghis boatmen.

Here was a large number of small vessels, chiefly used in transporting timber, (for house-building,) from the Volga, to the various towns on the borders of the Caspian Sea, the eastern Caucasus being entirely without trees.

The custom house officers came on board, and expended two hours in verifying our cargo, as it was a very large and miscellaneous one, consisting of cloth, furniture, cases of pencils, seltzer water, crockery, everything, in short; for no European goods, we were told, are as yet manufactured in the Caucasus, and it is the policy of Russia to cause as much as possible to be sent from Russia proper to these provinces.

Some very fine sturgeon were shown to us, weighing probably from thirty to forty pounds each. A passenger bought a somewhat

smaller one for one rouble, or about two shillings and eightpence. The sturgeons of the Caspian grow to a prodigious size; but the Beluga attain proportions almost incredible, being said to have been caught fifty-six feet long. In these fish a calculus is frequently found of a considerable size. Salmon are also said to be caught in great quantities; but the exact description I could not ascertain. The value of this fishery amounts annually to about fourteen millions of roubles, or two million sterling—a proof of the enormous number of sturgeon yearly caught here. Moreover, every fish at all undersized is cast again into the Volga.

In like profusion are the ducks, which are caught in nets, and which, the captain of the vessel assured me, could be purchased in the early winter for three halfpence each. He also said that there were a great number of pheasants in the islands of the Volga, near this station.

The water was still very shallow, not much more than eight or nine feet deep, so that it was necessary to proceed twenty miles further in the barge. By noon we reached Deefutter, or ten-foot station, that being the depth of the water. This was quite out in the Caspian Sea, entirely out of sight of the mainland, the only land visible being a small island called Chitty Bagore, or the four hillocks, which was about six miles distant. The captain told us that in the winter the sea is frozen to a distance of full twenty miles further out than this, where the water begins to increase in depth to about twelve or thirteen feet.

At Deefutter we ran alongside the steamer Kaspi, and transferred our passengers and cargo. The deck passengers, though very numerous, yet quickly struggled into their places. Even rich merchants do not disdain to practise this economy, for I was shown one who resided at Petrolvks, and was said to be worth a million of roubles, yet travelled as a deck passenger. This

gentleman was very much the worse for the quantity of vodka he had taken.

In Russia the merchants are rated in three classes, and are permitted to trade accordingly. The first class pay a yearly tax of four thousand roubles, about five hundred and thirty pounds, and they are permitted to trade throughout the world; the second class pay one thousand five hundred roubles, or about two hundred pounds, and these may only trade over Russia; the third class pay only three hundred roubles, or about forty pounds, and are only permitted to trade in their own towns. This system seems unwise, as tending to restrict the extension of trade, which it should be the object of the Government to encourage.

Leaving our anchorage at 7 P.M., we steered due south for Petrolvks. We were assured, as a singular fact, that in recurring periods of seven years the depth of the water in the Caspian Sea varies, for seven years increasing gradually by about three feet, and then for seven years diminishing; nor can any one give a rational account of this strange phenomenon.

The Caspian Sea is said to be eighty-five feet lower than the Black Sea, and its water more salt. Its greatest depth is not more than a few hundred feet. The immense rivers, which cast such enormous quantities of alluvial deposit into it, no doubt yearly diminish its area and depth, and probably will, in the course of ages, entirely fill it up.

The Caspian Sea at this point is about one hundred and sixty miles broad. There is a wild region towards the north-east, where the bordering lands are almost a desert, and inhabited only by wild Turcomans. There is no trade in that direction. The Russians penetrated for some distance into this country, taking the opportunity of doing so in the spring of the year, because at that time the herds of pasturage animals, which constitute the wealth of the Turcomans, were nourishing their young, so that

they could not be driven into the interior of the country, and thus the Russians were enabled to make advantageous terms with the wild inhabitants.

Strange as it may appear, this country must have been far more tranquil and civilised six hundred years ago than it now is, for Marco Polo seems to have crossed from near the mouth of the Volga to Bokhara in sixty days; yet to do so at all, at the present time, is next to impossible.

In the north-eastern bays of the Caspian, where none but fishermen appear to go, immense quantities of fish are taken, especially at the mouth of the Ural river, where there is a colony of the Don Cossacks, and near which seals are said to be very numerous.

Lower down on the eastern shores of the Caspian there is some idea of building a small fort, and of making a road to Khiva and Bokhara; but the great difficulty is the want of drinking-water, for it is said that for three hundred miles no wells exist. But it is difficult to believe this, as it is reported that, at some distance in the interior, there are high hills and forests of great extent, containing trees of a considerable size. Very little, however, appears to be known of this country; for the inhabitants are, perhaps, the wildest and most fanatic in the world. The Russian troops never proceed this way to their south-eastern possessions in Central Asia, but invariably by way of Orenberg.

The night between the 16th and 17th August did not belie the accounts which we had heard of the generally fretful state of the Caspian Sea. The vessel rolled and pitched most unpleasantly, and we did not make more than six miles an hour. The Caspian Sea is well lighted. There is a floating light near Chitty Bagore, and another half-way to Petrolvks, and a good lighthouse at that town; also one on the opposite or Asiatic coast; one at Derbent and at Bakou, at Leukoran, and also on

the island of Assumadah. An endeavour was made to persuade the Persians to put up a lighthouse at Angelli. They made an attempt to do this with a few poles, and placed a sort of lantern on it; but the Persian Government, on finding that the expense of maintaining this amounted to at least one hundred roubles, or about fourteen pounds sterling, a year, directed that no such useless expenditure should be incurred, and now there is no lighthouse on the Persian coast. The steamers, therefore, and all other vessels must grope their way into this harbour as best they can.

For many reasons we were sorry that time did not permit us to visit Derbent or Bakou. At Derbent, I was told, is to be seen the termination of a wall, after the fashion of the great wall in China, which formerly divided a considerable portion of Daghestan, reaching from near Kassi Kamook to Derbent. Bakou, or the city of the winds, (from the account given to us by Mr. Gereson, a resident inspector of education,) must be a most singular place. He told us that about fourteen miles distant from Bakou are hot springs, called "the eternal fires," which, until a few years since, were worshipped by a Persian sect of fire-worshippers, who have now, however, deserted the city. In this district, wherever a small hole is dug in the earth, naphtha immediately flows out; and when, some time since, too large a hole was dug, the naphtha flowed in such quantities that it could not be stopped. A concession has lately been granted to a company to work this industry in that district, the profits of which have already been considerable. These springs of naphtha are not only found on the land, but they exist also in the sea; and Mr. Gereson assured me that, upon five or six occasions, in very calm weather, he had gone out to visit them in a boat, and that, when the water is very smooth, the naphtha rising to the surface is easily distinguishable from the sea-water. He had person-

ally assisted in lighting it, and it burned freely for a time in the sea. A machine had been invented for pumping this liquid from the sea into ships, but, from some cause unknown to him, it had not yet been put into use. These springs appear to have been well known to the older inhabitants of this district, for Marco Polo relates that shiploads of oil were taken thence and transmitted to different parts of Armenia and Persia. There are also very considerable springs on the island of Svatoi, near Bakou, and again on the island of Chel-li-Ken, south of Krasnouvolsk, inhabited by Turcomans, on the eastern side of the Caspian Sea.

I may here mention that three steamers regularly traverse the Caspian, from March until the end of October, once a week, for an account of which I must refer to the Appendix. I name these facts as they may be of service to future travellers, and are not given in any guide-books that I have met with. Krasnouvolsk is a fort which the Russians have built on the eastern side of the Caspian. There is very little trade with the Turcomans who inhabit this country; but as it is requisite to supply the troops, who garrison this fort, with European stores, munitions of war, and clothing, etc., for this purpose the steamer which I before mentioned has been placed on this line. It is expensive to Government, having already cost some millions of roubles. This steamer burns coals brought from the river Don, costing thirty roubles, or 4*l.*, per ton, but stated to possess thirty per cent. more heating power than Newcastle coals.

CHAPTER XXX.

PETROLVKS AND TSURA.

Towards the afternoon the sea became more tranquil, but yet with a long roll, which, we were told, was of constant occurrence in the Caspian Sea. We passed the mouth of the river Terek, which torrent, rushing through the Pass of Dariel, adds so materially to the magnificent scenery; and arriving at the fishing station of Sulah, we came in sight of the town of Petrolvks. The passengers now began to show themselves on deck, for hitherto I had been almost the only one not overcome by sea-sickness, the rolling of the Kaspi having been incessant ever since we had left Deefutter.

Petrolvks is in latitude 43° north. This, however, does not give a correct indication of its climate, which is said to be very mild in winter, the snow seldom lasting more than a fortnight, whereas in Kertch, on the Black Sea, in the same latitude, and not more than three hundred miles due west, we were able in 1855 to land forty-two-pounder guns on the ice in the bay. Of the cause of this difference in climate I could receive no explanation. "The eternal fires" at Bakou doubtless indicate a subterranean heat, which may produce this effect. The mountains to the south of Petrolvks appeared high, but those to the south-west still higher. We gazed upon them with

much interest as a land little known to travellers, and one which we were most anxious to enter.

The formalities of landing were very slight, for in this military country, directly it was ascertained that I bore the rank of a general officer, every difficulty was removed. We were soon very fairly lodged in a hotel kept by a retired military officer. We heard that General Prince Mellikoff, the Governor of Daghestan, who usually resides at the provincial capital called Temir-han-Tsura, was at this time in Petrolvks, but was to leave on the following morning. We therefore deemed it best to pay our respects to him at once. He received us very kindly, and directed one of the officers in attendance to prepare for us a podorogna, or posting order, without which no post-horses are permitted to be supplied in any part of Russia. We spoke to him about visiting Guinib. He seemed surprised that we should know anything about it, and rather recommended that we should take the lower road under the mountains to Vladicaveas. This we probably should have done, and thereby have missed by far the most interesting portion of our whole tour, had we not been pre-advised by the Governor of Astrakhan and our excellent friend Colonel Michailoff.

Prince Mellikoff, however, said that if on our arrival at Tsura we still desired to visit the mountains and Shamyl's last stronghold, he would direct that we should be supplied with Cossack horses, on a small payment, to carry us up to Guinib. We slept very soundly on our wooden sofas, having, however, been carefully warned by the daughter of the landlord to see that our window-shutters were bolted, as otherwise, she said, the mountaineers might make an inroad upon our effects. This intimation showed us something of the wild character of the country in which we had arrived.

The morning of the 18th August was exceedingly hot, to make

up for the storm of the preceding day. Every Russian town on the coast is provided with a good bathing establishment, and this town was no exception to the rule. The Russians, who perhaps, of all people in Europe, might, from their geographical position and climate, be least expected to excel in the art of swimming, are generally, on the contrary, great proficients in this art, it being considered a strong point in their gymnastic exercises.

We called upon the commandant of the town, Colonel Chob-lo-Koff, who received us with much kindness, presenting us to his wife, who spoke French fluently, which he unfortunately did not. He immediately took great interest in our intended journey into the interior. They kindly invited us to dinner, and gave us a most excellent one, the more welcome as we had lately fared very badly in this respect. We here also made acquaintance with Captain Polsdoff, who spoke English with ease, and who had married a daughter of Mr. Rice, of Tiflis, an Englishman, who had been all his life under the protection and employment of Prince Waronzoff.

We were much indebted to Captain Polsdoff for his kindness, and the personal exertions and trouble that he took to assist us. We also made acquaintance and took tea with his sister and her charming family of handsome children. Every one must admire Russian children. They are uncommonly well brought up, free and affectionate, but exceedingly obedient, handsome, robust, stout little people, independent, yet very respectful.

We visited the bazaars, which seemed prosperous; and the town, although quite new, was evidently improving. We were informed that a few years ago this country was very wild, and that about three stages on the road to Vladicavcas, little more than ten years since, both infantry and guns were required to insure a safe passage under the mountains; but that since the

surrender of Shamyl all had been altered: the mountaineers had found their best and most profitable policy was peace; and now at least five hundred arabas—the carts of the country—came in every week, from the interior, with every description of produce.

In the bazaars we found a knowledge of the Turkish language, however slight, very useful; for it strongly resembles the Tartar language, which is used in this neighbourhood. On leaving the commandant's house we saw a large shed under charge of a guard of soldiers, who, however, allowed us to enter and inspect the imperial carriages for the use of the Emperor in the journey through the Caucasus. They were about forty in number, and of all descriptions, from an immense travelling coach for the Emperor himself, of great strength and size, and fitted with every regard to convenience, to light wagonettes for mountain roads.

In the afternoon we made inquiries regarding our post horses for the following day, and found that it would be impossible to procure any, General Prince Mellikoff, with his family of twelve children, relatives, servants, etc., etc., having already taken thirty-two post horses, and left none behind him. With the assistance, therefore, of Captain Polsdoff, we made an arrangement to hire a tarantasse and three horses, *en veturino;* but it was impossible to persuade the owner, who was to drive us himself, to start before 8 o'clock on the following morning.

At a quarter before 8 A.M. on the the 19th August we started on our journey through the Caucasus. The tarantasse, which was brought to the door of our hotel, was a most curious little carriage, something in the shape of a boat upon wheels; it had no pretensions to springs of any kind. Beneath the seat, which was made of stout rope network, it was well stuffed with hay. There was no box for the coachman; but here was an

advantage, as there was more room for our luggage, upon which he sat.

The Russians, from long habit, do not scruple to travel in these carriages, and seem not to care for springs, the posting-carts in no part of the empire being fitted with them. General Kamaroff subsequently told me that on one occasion he was directed to carry a despatch from Tiflis to the Emperor at St. Petersburg, a distance, probably, of two thousand versts, or about sixteen hundred miles; that he travelled the whole distance in seven and a half days and nights in the tarantasse, changing both carriage and horses at each station. He, however, allowed that he was nearly dead on his arrival, and that he did not recover for some days.

We soon passed the fort of Petrolvks, and proceeded on a new piece of road which was being made for the Emperor, who would pass this way on his first visit to Daghestan. Every man we now met was armed with a long dagger, and those on horseback also carried pistols, and in some instances long rifles also—a proof that we had left behind us the civilization of the West. We observed that each araba carried an extra felloe and some spokes, to mend their wheels, should occasion require it.

About twelve versts, or nine miles, from Petrolvks, we turned into a mountain defile towards the south, ascending by a steep road to the Tartar village of At-la-bou-rag, near to which a large detachment of soldiers was stationed for the purpose of improving the roads. Their tents in shape exactly resembled the old Roman tents. The scenery here was fine. We looked through the gorge between the mountains upon the interminable plains towards the north, which were added to the empire by Peter the Great. The Caspian Sea smiled brightly in the distance; in the immediate foreground stood the village and the tents of the troops, on the edge of a deep ravine.

We soon crossed this ridge of hills, and bumping over the plain beyond, at thirty-five versts from Petrolvks we came to the town of Kafir-Kurick, situated on the margin of a very pretty river. The castle of Schamkal-Khan was singularly situated on an isolated rock.

This was the furthest point within the mountains to which Peter the Great advanced after he had subjugated all the plain country and many towns on the banks of the Caspian Sea. The country a short distance beyond this was only conquered by Russia twelve years since, in the reign of the present Emperor. Near this village the primitive method of thrashing out the corn by oxen attached to sleighs fitted with flint teeth, and of winnowing it with the wind, was still in operation, thrashing and winnowing machines being unknown.

At half-past one we entered the military station of Temirhan-Tsura, generally called Tsura. This town is situated on a small but fertile plain, and is surrounded at a distance of five or six miles by mountains. It has now become the capital city of Daghestan, the government having lately been changed from a military to a civil one. It already promises to become of some importance. There are a good many public buildings, and a large but ugly church dominates the town. We paid our respects again to General Prince Mellikoff, and explained to him that we were most anxious to enter the mountains and visit Guinib, and, if possible, to proceed from thence to Vladicavcas, by the mountain pass. The prince directed the chief of his staff to assist us in our arrangements, and to order Cossack native guards to attend us, more, as was explained, for honour than for protection; but he appeared not to remember that at Petrolvks he had told us he would also direct Cossack horses to be placed at our disposal, on a small payment, to ride to Guinib. We then retired to the quarters of Colonel Schxourinnsky, of the État-

major, who made out all the requisite arrangements, and gave us, what was of more consequence, and as we subsequently found of more value, a letter of introduction to General Kamaroff, commanding the fort and district of Guinib.

It was our intention to have sent our telega, or tarantasse, with our baggage by a circuitous but good road, in charge of a Cossack; but on the following morning neither the coachman nor his carriage were to be found. Fearing the dangers from banditti in the mountains, he had started off, sacrificing the sum of four roubles, which we owed him, rather than undertake what he considered so dangerous a journey. We were fortunate enough to secure an extra horse for our baggage, which in the end proved the more useful plan of the two.

Colonel Schxourinnsky showed us some fine ibex heads, and also some turoo, which had been shot near to Bodlith, a station we should pass on our way to Vladicavcas. This determined me to make strict inquiries as to the large game to be found there. He placed before us a beautifully executed map of the whole country, in which huge mountains, with numerous mountain glaciers, were shown—an almost certain indication that there must be chamois, ibex, and perhaps makoor to be found there, and possibly, as they have not been much disturbed, they would not be difficult of approach. Colonel Michailoff, commandant of artillery, very kindly requested us to dine with him; and he gave us some sauterne from Derbent, on the Caspian Sea—a good wine, but rather strong.

Before leaving, we made some purchases in the bazaar, and found everything remarkably cheap. We paid only five shillings and sixpence for a pair of Persian carpet saddle-bags. We here observed that every shop was provided with the Chinese abacus, or counting-board, a square frame fitted with wires, upon which small round balls are made to run freely. These they work with

the greatest rapidity and correctness; but nothing astonishes them more than when the sum is worked in the head and told to them before they can finish it on their own board.

Not far from Temir-han-Tsura is the village of Gunri, birth-place of the illustrious patriot, Shamyl, so long the defender of his country against the inroads of the Russians.

CHAPTER XXXI.

FROM TSURA TO GUINIB.

At three o'clock our horses came to the hotel, rather sorry-looking animals, especially for the price we had to pay for their hire, namely, twenty-four roubles, or 3*l.* 5*s.* Their owner was a certain Abdul Kader, a Circassian Tartar, a clever fellow, and a sharp hand at a bargain, for he took very good care that we should not start until the money was paid in advance. In charge of a Cossack we left the town by the Derbent gate. The place of our destination, for this night, was called Jem-Gootai, distant from Tsura about eighteen and a half versts. The evening was not hot, but we still wore our puggarees, after the Indian custom, now universally adopted by all travellers in the East; it is here called a chalma, and consists of a thick roll of white muslin round our hats. We found to our surprise that this caused us to be mistaken for Mahomedans, and we were addressed as the Frank Mussulmans.

At 8 P.M. we arrived at Jem-Gootai, just in time to save ourselves from a drenching storm of rain, accompanied by thunder and lightning. It was dark, but our Cossack soon found the head man of the village, who showed us into a large but entirely unfurnished house, with most of the windows broken. We brought our baggage in, and placed two small boxes one on the top of the other for a table; then, obtaining the use of a samo-

var, together with some black bread, eggs, and milk, and using our small spirit-lamp, we sat down to poached eggs and tea. Then we spread our rugs upon a very dirty floor, and, in consequence of a greater absence than usual of insects, we slept pretty soundly. The Mahomedan creed did not prevent the head man of the village, or our Cossack, from each taking a glass of brandy before bidding us good-night.

On the morning of the 21st August we were up by four o'clock, but we were kept waiting for our horses. At 5 A.M. we were again in the saddle, and on our road for Girgibil, where we were to spend the night. I had no cause here to complain of my saddle, for Colonel Schxourinnsky, knowing how unpleasant the real Tartar saddles are to strangers, had volunteered to lend me one of his own—a modification of the Tartar, though not quite Russian; it was extremely well adapted for long rides, and I felt most grateful to him for his kindness.

Colonel Michailoff warned us that we might expect very different weather in the mountains from what we had been accustomed to during the last three weeks, and advised us to be prepared with our overcoats and india-rubbers. It was fortunate that we had received this warning, for we had scarcely started, when thick clouds surrounded us, and a drizzling rain set in. The storm also of the previous evening had rendered the roads very slippery; but the baggage being well packed, and the load not heavy, we made very good progress. The clouds, however, entirely obscured the views which, from the glimpses we got of them, we felt sure were very fine. The country was well cultivated in terraces up the sides of the mountains, evidently the work of long past ages. Every man that we met was armed with his long Circassian dagger; the cartridges for his fire-arms were carried in round cases sewed into the breast of his coat, in rows of about six or eight on either side—the style invariably

adopted in all parts of the Caucasus. Each man wore an enormous papach, or cap of sheep-skin; no one would believe the size of them—literally the whole skin of one of their small sheep was used in each cap. Custom, however, does not seem to have reconciled these people to this preposterous head-gear, for it is seldom one sees any Circassian who does not frequently remove his cap and rub his head, thereby showing its evident inconvenience. They, however, turn it to all sorts of uses, frequently carrying a large portion of their wardrobe in its crown, employing it, in fact, as a small portmanteau.

In passing up the last hill before we reached the station, at which we were to halt, in order to feed ourselves and horses, we passed a flock of sheep with enormous tails. This race I had frequently seen in India, where they are called Doombas; but I had never before seen them in Europe. Their tails were prodigious, containing probably five or six pounds of fat each.

About half-past nine we reached Auchkley, a small village built on the top of an eminence. Here we found a hospitable reception from a Tartar and his family, who lent us the use of his best rooms, and gave us every assistance from his cooking establishment. By making a noise like the cackling of fowl, and drawing our finger across our throats, we readily made him understand that we desired a pair of fowls for dinner, and, as there were plenty about, we soon procured them. I here saw a very curious glass jug of opaque white, apparently of old Venetian make. How such an article could have found its way into this Tartar village was to me somewhat difficult to comprehend. In the afternoon we continued our route to Girgibil, leaving the simple folk well satisfied with our visit.

On ascending the mountain, after leaving the village, a most lovely view towards the south presented itself. Passing over this ridge, we descended by a very steep road, and, suddenly turning

a corner, we came upon a most singularly built village, called Aimakee. The houses were constructed terrace above terrace; the roof of the lower one forming a sort of platform at the door of the one above it, for they all had flat roofs; they rose to a

PASS NEAR GUINIB.

considerable height in a narrow and hidden nook in the mountain. Passing to the bottom of this village, we turned abruptly to the left, into a cleft in the mountain, pursuing our course in the bed

of a mountain torrent, which the pathway crossed probably fifty times during our descent. Meanwhile the gorge was, in many places, not ten feet wide, while the cliffs overhanging us were apparently nearly a thousand feet high. We followed the windings of the stream, in this narrow gorge, for about nine versts. During rain it is exceedingly dangerous to take this short cut, especially on horseback; for General K—— told us that, when once in, it is impossible to get out, excepting by the entrance at Aimakee or the town of Girgibil, and that the pent-up river sometimes suddenly (with scarcely any warning, except that of dark clouds above) rises to a height of eighteen or twenty feet, sweeping everything before it. It would be difficult to do justice to the magnificence of the stupendous cliffs which overhang this mountain path, or properly to describe the grandeur of the scenery.

The town of Girgibil was, if possible, more singular than that of Aimakee. It appeared to be built on a succession of mounds, which possibly were of volcanic formation. A very civil Tartar seemed delighted to receive us in his house, spreading some handsome Persian rugs (which he took from a wooden bench, here called a "sofa") on couches and on the floor for our use, supplying us with milk and eggs, and not very black bread, and giving us the use of our constant friend, a samovar. The fuel used here was tissek, or dried cows' dung. It is a very poor substitute for coal or wood; but these are almost unknown in this country, which, although possessing in all the valleys much verdure, is destitute of timber.

It was with surprise and pain that we observed here, and at other places in these mountains, that spitting of blood was very common, from which we inferred that consumption must be of frequent occurrence.

The morning of the 22nd August opened with alternate clouds

and sunshine, adding greatly to the beauty of the scenery, and indicating that a change had taken place in the weather. The gardens at Girgibil were very large and luxuriant. Vines, peaches, apples, walnuts, and mulberry trees were numerous. We also observed some magnificent sun-flowers, and the hemp which was grown in some small patches by the roadside was at least seven or eight feet high.

Shortly after leaving the town, we passed by a bridge over the river Kara-Suu, or Black River, and took then a course due south, up the Koi-Suu, or Village River. The Koi-Suu descended through a rent in these magnificent mountains, in which there were curious caverns. The scenery in this portion of the Caucasus is remarkable for its immense rocks and mountain torrents. In consequence of the rain on the previous night, our horses did not travel very well. The Turkish horse-shoes, here universally used, are formed of one flat plate of iron, which covers the sole of the foot, with the exception of a small hole in the centre; this renders it excessively difficult for a horse to retain a sure footing either on rocks or slippery ground.

The women whom we met seldom covered their faces, but merely turned them on one side. They generally were good-looking. The skin beneath the eye was usually dyed dark; their nails had received a reddish hue. They were dressed in most gaudy colours—red, blue, and yellow. The men had a most determined and warlike appearance; they were invariably armed, and their long flowing beards frequently were dyed bright red.

Having passed through the first gorge, we came upon a grassy plain of land, about three miles long, with a breadth of three-quarters of a mile, possessing, I believe, every condition of climate, &c., for a most successful tea-plantation. The soil, we were informed, is strongly impregnated with iron. The land itself is nearly free from stones, and numerous rivulets

flow through it; and, at a small expense, a canal from the river might be formed, which would give a perpetual command of water. There might be some difficulty at first in regard to labour, which, however, could be readily imported. Horses and bullocks, for agricultural purposes, are remarkably cheap. I see also that Mr. Freshfield speaks of a plant called Pari, resembling the tea-plant, of which the natives on the southern side of Mount Elbrutz make tea. It is probably a kindred plant.

We now threaded a pass where the river was narrowed in its bed between high rocks, and where, at a comparatively small expense, the water could be dammed up, and a water power of immense magnitude could be formed for moving any sort of machinery. Here we met some handsome Circassians, fully armed —sword, rifle, dagger, pistol, and poignard. They were dressed in their long coats and enormous caps, and their beards were dyed red. They were mounted on shaggy, clean-looking ponies, and had an impressive appearance. Ten years ago, before the country was perfectly subdued, it was the habit of all the men to move about fully armed, as above described; now, however, they generally discontinue wearing the sword, the rifle, and the pistol; but the long dagger is invariably still worn by all.

The women do not possess the handsome figures or features of the men, and this may be accounted for by the abject servitude in which they are obliged to pass their lives. To the men are accorded the honour and responsibility of defending their homes; upon the women devolve, not only all the household labours, but also the greatest portion of the culture of the fields. The heavy burdens they are compelled to carry, the exposure to the weather, and early marriages, make them prematurely bent and old; and it is from these causes that the noble race of the mountaineers of Daghestan is said to be degenerating.

Previously to the conquest of this country, the men were

actively employed in their military services, at every instant ready to take up arms to defend their hills and valleys from the incursions of the Russians; but now that this is no longer required, it is to be hoped that they will, by degrees, take their due share of the agricultural and pastoral duties which properly belong to them.

We joined the large road which led to a handsome girder bridge over the Koi-Suu; this was of iron, and covered over, with the sides closed in and loophooled to act as a fortification, the roof and sides being composed of thin plates of iron. This bridge was about to be divided into five rooms, temporarily fitted with glass windows, as the Emperor was to breakfast there on his way to Guinib. The bridge spanned a wide chasm of immense depth, through which the river roared in a wild torrent, adding to the impressive grandeur of the scenery.

Leaving the iron bridge, we continued our course up the river for about seven versts, when we crossed it by a well-built stone bridge of a single arch, and at once began the ascent of the mountain by a road which wound up to the fortress of Guinib. A plummet could be held over our heads from the impending rocks three thousand feet above us, on which the fort is built. The road zigzagged as we gradually approached the fort, the whole presenting the most singular and inaccessible position that it is possible to imagine.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE FORT OF GUINIB.

We entered the fort of Guinib by a well-protected gateway, and rode at once to the house occupied by General Kamaroff, where we presented our letters of introduction. The general received us with the utmost kindness and every hospitality, gave us a charming little house on the parade-ground, very nicely furnished, and prepared for us a most sumptuous dinner, which was by no means unacceptable after the fatigues and privations of the last few days. We here tasted some of the far-famed Kahiti wine, and this of the finest quality, a considerable quantity having been sent to General Kamaroff direct from the vineyard near Tiflis to meet the wants of the Emperor and his suite. General Kamaroff said he had an especial pleasure in receiving Englishmen, and that he felt quite sure all animosities on either side, which some years since might have existed, had now been quite buried in oblivion. Moreover, he remarked that Englishmen seldom came and visited them; for the only two upon his record as having travelled into Daghestan since its occupation by Russia, previous to the arrival of ourselves, were Colonel Cathcart and Mr. Raason. We thought this very extraordinary at the time, but we subsequently heard the same at Honsak and Bodlith. Certainly the kindness and hospitality of the Russian officers convinced us that Englishmen, but especially of my pro-

fession, would be received with the utmost cordiality by them.

There is no part of Daghestan so replete with interest as the heights of Guinib. It is a huge mountain isolated from all those around it, and about five thousand feet above the sea. It is about five miles long by three broad, and possesses a natural castellated wall of a gigantic type on its northern face, and on the others a parapet of equally gigantic proportions. On all sides it has a natural wall, the rocks being scarped directly down, in heights varying from one thousand to one thousand five hundred feet. It has only three possible approaches by which man can enter, and each of these most difficult of access even where no resistance is offered.

It was in this natural fortress that Shamyl in 1859 made his last stand against the Russian forces. For thirty years Shamyl, having placed himself at the head of the Circassian Tartar tribes, had successfully defied the whole strength and power of Russia. The cost of this long war to Russia in men and money had been enormous. Although she had long occupied both the Cis- and Trans-Caucasus, yet she had never been able to subdue the intervening mountains; but in her obstinate determination to do so she had kept during these thirty years in the Caucasus two hundred and fifty thousand soldiers, on the average. Only thirty or forty thousand of these had been employed on the frontiers of Turkey and of Persia; the services of more than two hundred thousand being devoted exclusively to subjugating the mountain tribes, and especially those of Daghestan, which contained the strongest natural positions, and the most warlike and fanatic tribes under the leadership of the renowned Shamyl. It is difficult to see the exact reasons which could lead Russia to expend such enormous sums of money and so many valuable lives year after year in the struggle for a conquest of that, which

at best could prove but a barren acquisition; but the determination of her autocratic ruler, and of the nation generally, forbade them to relinquish what they had once undertaken, and having committed themselves to this policy they could not abandon it in the sight of the numerous hordes in Asia who had been for years watching the result. Like most mountaineers, the natives were energetic, ardent, religious, and faithful to their trust; but, moreover, being Mussulmans and exceedingly fanatic, they carried on year after year this exhaustive struggle, regarding it as a religious war. The mountain tribes formed a sort of republic, each district being under its own chief. Shamyl sought to give them unity by amalgamating them under one head, which was himself; and by the force of his character he succeeded in so doing. In this great object he was by no means scrupulous, considering any measure and any cruelty justifiable, where the danger to Islamism was imminent.

For nearly thirty years he contrived to keep open his communications, and invariably to get the mountaineers to assist in his views. At length, driven from the neighbourhood of Bodlith, with not more than three hundred followers, he obtained permission from the head of the village to occupy Guinib on payment, they say, of four hundred roubles. This circumstance of the payment by Shamyl himself of a sum of money to enter a position which was supposed to be entirely under his rule proves the strength of the place, for it was an admission that the few villagers who resided there could have prevented his entrance. The Russians, having gained the information that Shamyl had eluded them in the west, and had entered Guinib, determined at all hazards to secure him there. A man of wonderful energy and character, General Prince Baryatinsky had succeeded to the supreme command in the Caucasus, and he, well knowing the enormous advantages which would be gained by Russia by a

termination of the war, and the gratitude and favour which the Emperor and his country would shower upon him if he was successful, made the most determined efforts to ensure success. With this view he surrounded the mountain on all sides with an enormous force. At the weakest point, where now the fort of Guinib has been built, Shamyl had erected a strong loopholed wall, which still exists. The object of the Russian commander was to draw as large a portion of the force of the enemy as possible to one point, and with this view, in broad day, two battalions resolutely climbed up a mountain road to the wall. Fully two thousand feet up did these resolute soldiers advance, almost the whole time under a galling fire from above. Numbers fell; yet the main body advanced until they reached the wall, which they at once resolutely assaulted. This assault, although successful, was purchased at a further loss, in hand-to-hand conflict, of about two hundred of their numbers, the fanatical Mussulmans preferring death, with Paradise, to surrender. Sword and dagger in hand they fell upon the Russians; but the weight of numbers prevailed, and out of the force of about two hundred and fifty men, which Shamyl had placed there, more than one hundred and fifty perished in this noble defence.

There is a fine picture now being exhibited in the Kensington Gallery—by permission of the Emperor of Russia, painted by Growzinski, of this assault of the fortress of Guinib.

The assault, having been made by day, produced the desired effect of drawing almost every man of the small force which Shamyl possessed to this point, leaving the two other passes almost undefended. In the meanwhile, therefore, two other bodies of men, scaling the intricate passes in the rear, entered upon the hill; two companies under Colonel Radetsky mounted by a path on the north, which it is almost incredible could be ascended by any soldiers. Shamyl, now surrounded in the

village, which was in itself undefended, saw that it was impossible for him to do otherwise than surrender at discretion. General Prince Baryatinsky, seating himself upon a rock, received his brave enemy, now a prisoner of war. The stone on which he sat has been carefully preserved, a sort of garden-house having been built over it, and an account of the circumstance carved upon it.

The joy of the Emperor on receiving the news of these events can be readily understood, since by this victory, unimportant though it was in regard to the force of the enemy, he would probably be enabled ere long to reduce his army in the Caucasus by one hundred thousand men. Shamyl was sent to St. Petersburg, and a yearly pension granted him of eight thousand roubles—little more than one thousand pounds sterling.

The way in which Shamyl moved about the country was very remarkable: he was invariably accompanied by two hundred horsemen, chosen Avarians; one hundred rode before and one hundred behind, and although these men would have laid down their lives for him, yet they never perfectly trusted him, and on no occasion was he ever permitted to be out of their sight. For, notwithstanding their implicit obedience, yet they ruled, to a certain extent, independently of him, forming amongst themselves a sort of parliamentary council.

That Shamyl perfectly understood the reason of his long success in resisting the power of Russia is clearly shown by his speech to Cornet Gramoff, who came to arrange the release of some captured Russian ladies. "You say my roads are bad, and country is impassable. It is well; I am pleased to hear you speak as you do. Now you understand how the powerful Tsar, who will not submit to three kings (this was at the period of the Crimean War) can still do nothing with me, though he never ceases to send his armies against me. I do not venture to com-

pare myself to these powerful sovereigns. I am Shamyl, a common Tartar; but my bad roads, my woods, and my defiles make me much stronger than a good many monarchs. I ought to anoint all my trees with oil, and mix my mud with fragrant honey, so much do they tend to the salvation of my country."

He appears to have been a man of great decision, and to have hesitated at no cruelty when he considered his commands slighted. It is said that having captured a large number of Russian officers, he desired them to have no communication through means of any artifice with their friends. One day, however, he discovered that they had received a letter inserted in a loaf of bread; upon which he directed that ten of them should be put to death, and his sentence was immediately carried into execution.

Ghazi Mahomet Effendi, the eldest son of Shamyl, whom I saw at Constantinople, is a very handsome, tall man. He has now taken up his permanent abode there, the Emperor of Russia granting him an annual pension of five thousand roubles, or about eight hundred pounds sterling. His second son has taken service in the Imperial army. Shamyl himself died last year in St. Petersburg.

Most interesting accounts are given by the Russian officers of the difficult and hazardous enterprises in which they had been engaged in this war. The most disastrous of these was the utter defeat of a column under Prince Woronzoff, who was directed by the Emperor to make an advance into the mountains at all hazards. This expedition was entirely unsuccessful, and nearly the whole force perished. Shamyl in this success (a more detailed account of which I shall give hereafter) took many pieces of mountain ordnance, and also the material by which he could make more.

Upon the parade at Guinib may now be seen sixteen brass guns and two hundred and forty-four iron shot, taken in the

assault of Guinib—a puny armament against such a mighty power as Russia, with her million of soldiers, but suggesting how careful a nation should be not to get entangled in a mountain warfare against brave men such as these, whom all the resources of this mighty empire could not subdue in thirty years.

A singular plan was adopted by these mountaineers which certainly deserves notice; for not only was their army the first armed with the rifle, but they adopted a novel kind of screen, by which they were enabled to advance upon their enemy in much security. This was composed of tough hides backed by wool, which they pushed before them, and which resisted most of the Russian bullets, while it gave good cover to their marksmen. It is remarkable that a similar screen, but of iron in place of hides, has lately been invented to cover the advance of our engineers and sappers, and credit claimed for it as a novel invention.

On the morning of the 23rd of August we had a most charming ride with General Kamaroff, commanding the district of Guinib, who kindly lent us his own horses. He first showed us the fortress, which is very strong, and erected appropriately to the position; thirty pieces of cannon are mounted on its walls, but, indeed, without their aid, even if defended with musketry alone by very moderate troops, it is quite impregnable, and as it possesses an unlimited supply of excellent water, has large store-houses replete with all sorts of provisions and fuel, as well as plenty of ammunition, it is quite impossible that any force the Tartars can collect together, should possess themselves of it.

The difficulties and cost in the erection of this fort have been much augmented by the fact that no timber exists in these mountains within practicable distance; every piece of wood, therefore, used in the construction of it, or in the houses occupied by the officers and others, is conveyed from the upper part of the Volga, through Astrakhan, thence by the Caspian Sea to Petrolvks,

from which town it is sent in arabas, or country carts, by the mountain roads, one hundred and thirty versts up this mountain, five thousand feet above the sea.

In our ride we came to the village which sheltered Shamyl.

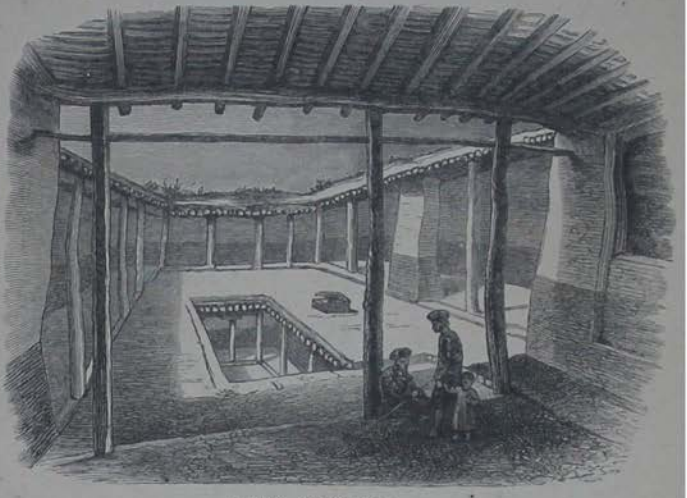
SHAMYL'S VILLAGE, GUINIB.

The house in which he resided was interesting, together with its underground vault, in which he confined his prisoners,—a small hole, into which, at one time, he thrust no less than one hundred and forty Russian soldiers.

The view from the mountain-top was the grandest thing of the kind that I had ever seen: rugged peaks and noble rocky mountains as far as the eye could reach, the summits of many of them being covered with snow. Looking over the naturally scarped cliff, we saw numerous black vultures of immense size floating in the air a hundred feet below us. A sort of imperial

throne had been cut in a hillock at the very edge of the rock, on which was to be erected a seat, from which the Emperor would be able to overlook the whole range of these majestic mountains, so lately added to his dominions.

A large village, called Chok, was pointed out to us, which had



TARTAR HOUSE, CHOK.

successfully resisted a Russian attack some few years since, and had only succumbed after the fall of Guinib. The precautions of war are still in force, the soldiers when they leave the fort being invariably fully armed, an instance of which we observed in a party who were proceeding in the district for the purpose of obtaining forage.

After a pleasant ride of about thirty versts we returned to the fort, and were again entertained most hospitably by General Kamaroff. His wife, a Georgian lady, played with a wonderful perfection upon the pianoforte, and by her charming manner added in no small degree to the pleasure of the evening.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

HONSAK AND BODLITH.

At an early hour of the 24th of August we left Guinib. We proposed to reach Honsak, in the district of Avari, that afternoon —a distance of fifty-six versts, which, in these mountains, is no light task to accomplish in one day. But we were spared all trouble and anxiety by the forethought of General Kamaroff, who wrote to General Prince Nakashudjce, the commandant of Avari, to give us all the assistance in his power; their study appeared to be to enable us to travel with the greatest comfort and the least expense. A stranger in a distant mountain land cannot but feel grateful for such kindness and attention.

Seated in a small regimental two-wheeled cart, drawn by two stout horses, but without springs, we left the fort, and mounted the hill to a bridge over a chasm. Here the engineers were making repairs against the advent of the Emperor. They said that we positively could not pass; the entire planks of the bridge had been removed for full fifty yards. But General Kamaroff at once told them we must, and forming a sort of impromptu covering, they led the carriage and horses over. One wheel went through, and one horse partly followed, but some stout soldiers came to the rescue, and fairly carried the whole vehicle over. We then proceeded up the mountain, having a view of

the defences of the fort as we went out. I observed that the traverses to the loop-holed wall were formed of loop-holed

PASS NEAR GUINIB.

musket-proof iron doors, a plan which I have never before seen adopted. It is simple, and, unless against artillery, I

should say very effective, more especially for small mountain forts.

We passed Shamyl's village, and trotted on to the last turn in the road to which a wheeled carriage could go. The journey was not a long one, but was the most painful we had yet had, for we were not yet broken in to travelling in carts without springs. Here awaited us horses lent us by the general, and also others hired to carry our baggage.

After mounting the summit of the hill we passed out of this natural fortress by a tunnel which the Russians had excavated through the solid rock, fully two hundred yards in length and twelve feet high,—on emerging from which a magnificent panorama presented itself to our view. Three valleys concentrated themselves immediately beneath us, fully 2,000 feet below. We then followed a winding road which had been cut out of the face of the mountain, in the sliding treacherous soil, and descended for about twelve versts, until we arrived at the extraordinary cleft or gorge of Karadat, where the rocks open, as if cut with a knife, to a depth of at least five hundred feet, and not more than ten or twelve feet wide. Through this a small stream ran, in the bed of which we rode down.

Just before entering the gorge we passed the mouth of a coal-pit, and although the coal appeared of very inferior quality, yet it is valuable here, where so little fuel exists; it is sufficiently good to be used in burning lime, and for other purposes at the fort of Guinib. There are sure indications that good coal exists in these mountains, which no doubt will be discovered. Jet of excellent quality is found in large quantities. It is manufactured into cartridge cases, which are worn on the breast, as I have before described. It is here called gargat, and is considered more fashionable than the mounting of silver. It takes a beautiful polish. I am informed that where jet

exists extensively, there is no doubt that coal is to be found also.

We observed with pleasure bushes of sweet briar, and broke off some branches, relishing the old familiar smell so common in our own island, but which I had never previously met with in this latitude.

As soon as we had passed through the cleft of Karadat, we came upon a small plain, where by the side of the river Koi Suu were encamped about one thousand wild Tartars. They were assembled for the purpose of repairing the roads (a work which is obligatory upon the inhabitants), preparatory to the arrival of the Emperor. These men formed a rude line, habited in their long dresses of different colours, every one with a handsome dagger at his waist. The general inspected them, riding down the line.

Shortly before arriving at the fort of Karadat, we had a lovely view of the grand saddle mountain, to which I would call the attention of any artist who may travel in Daghestan.

The fort of Karadat is a strong well-built "tête de pont." It is built of brick, and is covered with iron. It will hold about three hundred and fifty men, and has seven pieces of ordnance mounted in its towers.

We left Karadat about 3 P.M., and as we had now got to the confines of General Kamaroff's command, we bade him adieu. We felt very grateful to him for all he had done for us, for his kind and hospitable reception, and for the trouble which he had taken to make our visit agreeable, and to expedite us on our journey with every honour.

Leaving the sub-government of Guinib, we entered that of Avari, passing over the river Avari Koi Suu by a handsome bridge. This river is generally impassable throughout the year except by the bridge. Rushing with impetuosity over a rocky bed, it forms a valuable military barrier against invasion.

Every battalion in the Caucasus appears to be on a war-footing, and to each is accorded a complement of about one hundred horses, and a proportionate number of waggons, in addition to which the soldiers of the regiment jointly keep a considerable number of horses at their own expense. The full details of this institution I could not perfectly arrive at; but from what I learned it appeared to me to be a useful one, enabling the army to take the field at a moment's notice. These horses and waggons are attended to and driven by the soldiers, who are thus rendered at all times capable of performing a duty so useful on service.

We had not proceeded up the mountain more than five versts, by an excellent road, when we met the carriage and escort provided for us by General Prince Nakashudjce, from Honsak, the head-quarters of his command. The escort was commanded by a very smart intelligent young native officer, whom we afterwards had the pleasure of meeting at dinner. We here, therefore, dismounted from our Tartar ponies, and entered an exceedingly comfortable, small, and strongly-built britska, which was drawn by four horses. Always ascending, we thus continued for about sixteen versts on our way up the mountain. The road at places was exceedingly steep, but the horses did not jib or flinch, and only once at the turn of the road, at the edge of a precipice, where it was narrowed for repairs, did we encounter any difficulty. But here the fore-feet of one of our wheel horses were caught in the splinter bar of one of the leaders, and the horse was thus dragged for some yards very near to the edge of the ravine. Quickly, however, the Russian coachman, a corporal, descended from his box, and having first extricated the animal, then gave it a good thrashing for its stupidity. These horses are exceedingly sagacious, and are invariably driven without blinkers—in my opinion a sensible plan.

About half way up the mountain we found a considerable number of natives repairing the roads, preparatory, as usual, to the arrival of the Emperor; and to encourage them at their work a piper was playing lustily on the bagpipes. This musical instrument appeared to be formed exactly like those used in Scotland. I have remarked that mountaineers in all parts of the world resemble each other in their habits, arms, musical instruments, and the texture of their clothing.

We had just reached the summit of the mountain, and were yet thirteen versts from Honsak, when night fell upon us. The moon luckily was half-full, but the mountain became overclouded; thunder and lightning surrounded us. Fortunately, however, we had passed the dangerous precipices, and our coachman pressing on, we reached the fort about 8 P.M., and proceeding two versts beyond this, we arrived at the residence of Prince Nakashudjee, general of the district. Nothing could be kinder than his reception of us. He placed at our disposal two rooms, fitted with every comfort, and soon after a superb repast was served up, in which London porter and the best wine of the vineyard of Kahiti found a place.

Prince Nakashudjee is a native of Georgia. He is a most agreeable person, possessing pleasing manners, but simple and soldier-like in his habits. He was not very well acquainted with French, but his medical officer, one of his guests, spoke fluently in that language, and readily translated all that was said. The prince is married to a Spanish lady, a daughter of General Espinasse, but unfortunately for us, she was then absent at Petigorse, a mountain sanatorium near Elbrutz, famed for its mineral waters, to which I propose to advert on a future occasion.

On the following morning, the 25th August, we gave ourselves a long rest after the fatigues of the preceding days, but when

breakfast was over, I accompanied Prince Nakashudjee on a visit to the fort of Honsak. This is entirely a new construction upon a model which the Russians have instituted for these mountains. This fort is well built, and possesses many valuable conditions well adapted to this country. It has excellent flank defences; it is not of too great an extent, and is easily defensible by a comparatively small force. It is built to hold about one thousand five hundred men, upon what we should call a limited space for that number. In my opinion, here, as in all the Russian forts in the Caucasus, sufficient attention has not been paid to the ditches—one of the most valuable portions of the defence of any fortified place. This fort is armed with forty pieces of cannon; has large store-houses, very comfortable barracks, and very good quarters for the officers, which were being painted and papered when I was there, showing that even in these distant parts attention is paid to the comfort of the officers of their army. The church was not yet built, but the ground had been laid out, and a fine peal of bells was already erected on wooden supports in the yard, the Russians being famous as a nation for their ingenuity and perfection in the art of casting bells.

The great difficulty which is encountered in this district is the want of fuel, for although the winter is never very severe, yet it is comparatively long, fires being required for seven months. The only fuel which they can obtain in this country is turf, to procure which demands severe labour, and in general it is brought from great distances. There is no wood in this part of Daghestan, and coal in any quantity, or of good quality, as I before said, has not been found. For timber, for building purposes at Honsak, they do not depend upon the Volga. Fir timber is cut in the forests not far from Bodlith, about fifty versts to the west, and is sent down the Avari Koi Suu. It is stranded near to Karadat; it is used there as well as at Honsak,

but the enormous difficulties of transport over the mountains render it inadvisable to use it at Guinib.

We next visited a most beautiful cascade of water not far distant, where the river Tabot casts itself over a rocky ledge into a deep ravine, at least three hundred feet below. It is said that not far below the cascade the infant Mohammedan Prince of Honsak was by orders of Shamyl thrown over the cliff and drowned in the surging waters of the river.

A fearful storm broke over us in the afternoon; heavy rain descended, which on the subsequent days proved of no small inconvenience to us on our journey, and what was of more consequence, gave infinite labour and trouble to the natives of the mountains by the damage done to the road, where in some instances the labour of weeks was destroyed in a few minutes. It caused, also, great anxiety to the general in command, in whose districts the Emperor was about to travel. The afternoon was spent in taking sketches of the militia Cossacks, and in a very interesting conversation regarding this singular country and its people. Here we were shown the sword and holy shirt of Aboo Moslim, a Mohammedan saint, which is kept in the Mosque of Honsak. The sword has nothing remarkable in it. The shirt is covered entirely over with verses of the Koran, beautifully worked in Arabic characters. This sword and shirt were carried by the most holy fanatics attached to Shamyl on any desperate expedition, and had a wonderful effect in inspiring the bravery of his soldiers. Again we were most sumptuously entertained, and in compliment to our nationality a liberal allowance of bottled London porter, which here costs five and sixpence the bottle, was again handed round.

On Saturday morning, the 26th of August, we started in Prince Nakashudjee's carriage for the village of Choke, our baggage being again sent on before us. We bade farewell to

our kind host, who had evinced such hospitality to us since we had crossed into his command. We afterwards found that, knowing we were to proceed by a mountain road to Wedden, he had sent on, fully fifty miles in advance, a tent, dinner, and one or two servants to the edge of the lake Ai-si-lam, or Forelli, the trout lake, so that we should find no inconvenience from want of shelter in the highlands; for which kindness we could not thank him, as we were not aware of it when we left him.

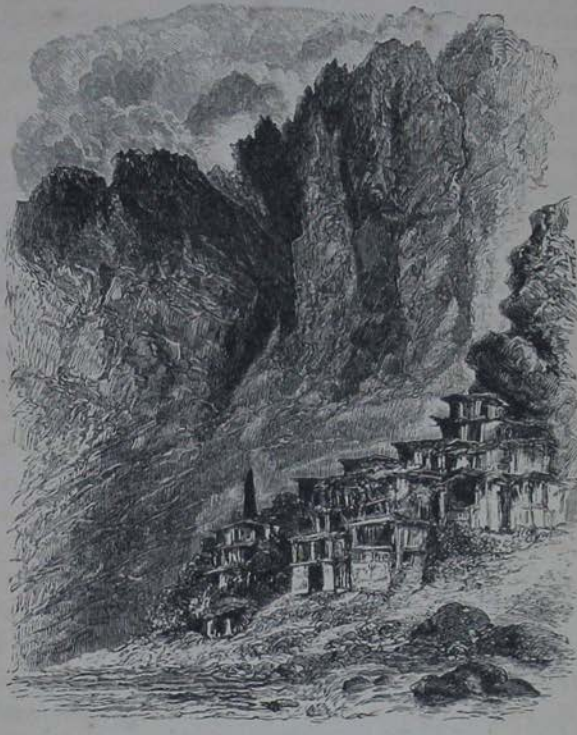
The roads in Avari were much broken by the rains, occasionally so much so as to cause us to travel close to the precipices, which presented themselves on alternate sides, within a few inches of the carriage wheels. Parapets to these ugly roads existed only at rare intervals. The rider of the leaders sat on the off-hand horse, and both he and the coachman seemed most thoroughly to understand their business. We frequently met Russian soldiers returning to the fort from turf-cutting in the mountains, for in this country all these duties, such as cutting and making hay, are performed by the troops; moreover, they are employed in building their own barracks, making roads, and other works, so that to a very considerable extent the Russian soldier is self-supporting. We passed many villages deserted by their inhabitants, for, since the conquest of their country by the Christians, many of the proprietors, for religious reasons, have emigrated to Turkey, retaining an inveterate hatred of their present rulers. Great care and forethought are used to prevent a rising of the people, which, although it could not now possibly be successful, yet would cause much bloodshed and trouble. One only, we were informed, had taken place, about four years since, in the neighbourhood of Bodlith. It, however, was very soon suppressed, and mountain forts were erected and other measures taken to prevent its recurrence.

About one o'clock we reached Choke. This village is situated on the banks of the river Angri Su. Here a bridge was in course of erection, under the superintendence of a native engineer officer. It was made of wood, on the lattice girder principle, with the addition of two trusses in the centre, which I should consider faulty, as not possessing sufficient strength in so vital a part. The horses in our carriage had now, without a halt, brought us a distance of forty-two versts, more than thirty miles, and over roads in many places in a fearful state, on account of the previous rain, yet they did not seem in the least tired after their hard work. We had intended to proceed further that evening, but were warned not to attempt this, if there should be rain in the mountains, as there was a certain treacherous mountain torrent, about half way from Choke to Bodlith, which was not bridged, and in wet weather would certainly be very dangerous to ford; the village on its banks, unfortunately, was built on the other side, so that, if, on arriving at it, prudence should forbid our attempting to ford it, we should have no shelter for the night. Under these circumstances, and as the rain continued to descend in one continuous stream, we determined to put up for the night in Choke. Anticipating the probability of such an event, Prince Nakasudjee had sent an order that the best rooms in the rather poor khan of the place, should be made as clean and comfortable as possible, that a lamb should be roasted, and that wine, bread, and fruit should be supplied to us. In addition to this we got eggs and milk, and turned out an omelet with perfect success, cooking it over our small spirit lamp; we also made very fair progress in asking for what we wanted in the Russian and Tartar languages. We slept on our hard planks as well as the small pests, everywhere to be found in the East, would allow us, and rose at five A.M. on the following morning as usual, to continue our journey to Bodlith.

After riding about ten versts we came, near the village of Mooroom, to the stream alluded to as likely to have impeded us had we proceeded on the previous evening; although we had now no difficulty in passing, yet there were evident signs that the evening before, it had been running in torrents. At the junction of the river below Mooroom was a singular Tartar bracket bridge. The centre uniting the two fixed ends was constructed in the form of a swing bridge, made with flexible wands of wood. The new Russian road, we were now informed, had in some places been destroyed; we were thus compelled to take the old Tartar road by the side of the river. In the end we considered ourselves very fortunate, as this brought us to some interesting places, which otherwise we should not have seen. Shortly after leaving Mooroom we passed a singular natural salt spring, from whence Shamyl obtained the salt he required for his army, and riding for a considerable distance on some narrow and dangerous causeways, we passed a village called Khan-ce-dat, our sure-footed ponies never making a false step. Here we procured some excellent grapes and peaches from the gardens, which in their character and mode of cultivation strongly resembled those in the valleys in Cashmere. A large number of mulberry trees were, moreover, planted by the roadside, showing that formerly silk-worms must have been reared extensively in this locality.

Crossing over the river Oor by a Tartar bridge, we arrived at the Lesghian village of Inkulluk. This is one of the most curious places I have ever seen; it is partially built in caverns in the rock, and possesses extraordinary underground streets and houses. It is very difficult to convey a proper idea of it to the reader. This town appeared to me to be situated in some of the wildest scenery of the Caucasus, the inhabitants seemed strange people; and subsequently, when I mentioned to some Russian officers my having been there, they seemed surprised

that we should have penetrated this singular defile. In this district a curious custom is said to have existed. The son of the Prince, soon after his birth, was carried from village to village over the entire of his government or Khanite, and was



ON RIVER OOR, INKULLUK.

suckled by every woman who had a child at her breast. This custom was supposed to be the means of establishing a brotherhood between the Prince and his subjects.

On leaving Inkulluk we passed on horseback by a narrow

foot bridge, composed of only three planks in width, over a swiftly running stream, into which one false step would have precipitated us, and then came in view of the old lines or fortress within which Shamyl so long resisted the Russians. Perched on the mountain side, behind the defences, his men, armed with the heavy rifles in use in these mountains, and far superior to any arm which the Russians then possessed, leisurely fired at the advancing troops, and when by their deadly aim they caused a panic, which was not unfrequent, then dashing from their fortress down upon the narrow pathways beneath, sword and dagger in hand, they quickly put to death the alarmed and disorganised foe.

The excitement of the sub-officer of the Militia-Cossack escort, named Ali Galbat, was very great, as he showed us the scenes in which he had acted a part in some of those actions, and stripping up his sleeves he showed the scars of some fearful wounds which he had received in one of those encounters on this very spot.

My ride this day was most painful in consequence of the Tartar saddle being excessively narrow and small, and made with a perfectly upright peak and cantle, so that it was almost impossible to sit upon it, which made me repent not having brought one of my own, even at the risk of much trouble and some considerable expense.

Shortly before we arrived at Bodlith, we again crossed the river Angri-Su by a well-constructed and strongly fortified bridge. About 11 A.M. we arrived at the residence of General Prince Chaf-cha-vadsey, who commanded the entire district of the Lesghians. He was absent on a tour of inspection, but was expected to return every moment. In the interim we were received with great kindness by General Prince Orbeliani, who spoke French fluently. Exceedingly nice rooms were placed at our

disposal, fitted up with handsomely carpeted divans, and on one side of mine there was an English-made velvet carpet stretched on the wall, and on this were suspended some remarkably beautiful Circassian arms, such as rifles inlaid with gold, daggers, pistols, etc.

About an hour after our arrival Prince Chaf-cha-vadsey returned from Karadat, and welcomed us to his house in a most hospitable manner. To our great delight, just before dinner our very kind host of Honsak, General Prince Nakasudjee, also joined us, having ridden upon one horse that morning from Honsak, about sixty versts distant, and with the intention of riding the same horse another sixty versts, namely to Wedden, on the following morning. There is no doubt but that these Russian general officers are very hard fellows; for although we pride ourselves on horsemanship and endurance, yet there are not many of our generals who would be equal to such hard work as this.

The dinner was handsomely served, and of course in the Russian style; after which we had a most interesting conversation regarding the Crimean war, upon which subject the Russian officers appeared excessively fond of conversing, more especially with one who had served through the whole of it, although I met very few of the officers of the army of the Caucasus who had been employed in the Crimea, for at that time they had plenty to do in their own country. We also talked a great deal regarding the Caucasus. Their accounts were most interesting of the difficulties they had met with in conquering the warlike Circassians, especially the Lesghians, in the centre of whose country we then were.

Some curious facts were mentioned regarding the honourable way in which these mountaineers keep their word. In the district of Avari there may be about fifteen assassinations in a year, chiefly arising from quarrels among these quick-

tempered men, who are very passionate, and are always armed at least with a dagger. It not unfrequently happens that the murderer will himself come and report his crime, having done which, he will return home and there await his sentence, when, if it be exile to Siberia, he will personally attend, when required by the commandant of the district, and will then, proceeding alone, carry to Temir-han-tsura, the head-quarters of Daghestan, his own arrest, and personally deliver himself at the jail. Both General Kamaroff and General Prince Nakasudjee told me that they had no hesitation in granting the request of these men to present themselves for punishment, although they knew their sentence would be that of exile from their dear native mountain homes; nor had they ever known a single instance in which the confidence they had reposed in them had been abused.

The crime of murder, if in a quarrel, and not deliberate, generally receives very light punishment—too light, in my opinion, being seldom more than expatriation from their villages for a year or so. The punishments formerly in use seem to have been barbarous and singular. It is stated that should a woman kill the murderer of her husband, she was put, with her children, into a deep pit for three months, and was then married again to the first man who would marry her. No woman was formerly permitted to remain a widow more than three months, so great was the scarcity of the population of the mountains during the exhaustive wars with the Russians.

Native judges are now appointed to each district, who try and punish crimes, and award suits, according to ancient native usage and laws. The whole of the proceedings are written in Arabic. None of these mountaineers have any written language, but use commonly the Arabic character. A Russian general took much pains to endeavour to introduce the Tartar or Turkish character,

but I am told without much success, and in my opinion happily so, for if a new character is to be adopted, surely it would be wise to introduce the Russian, and by slow steps to obliterate the numerous native mountain dialects. It is stated that there are no less than seventy different dialects in the Caucasus; many of them are by no means derived even from the same roots, and it would seem certain that, were the European characters adopted throughout the whole country, no ill-effect could arise which would not equally do so should they adopt the Turkish or Persian. The mountaineers are very fond of law. Cases have been known in which a man has gone twice from Guinib to Tsura, a distance of about ninety miles, upon a question of twenty copecks, or about sevenpence of our money.

The women of this country appear to have degenerated considerably since the Russian conquest. Formerly their greatest pride was to polish their husbands' arms, and to jeer him if he was not brave in fight; now they seem worn out by toil, dejected, and certainly do not possess those personal charms which are so generally attributed by us to all the Circassian race. Old legends attribute to Daghestan the honour of being the locality in which, in ancient days, the Amazons flourished.

By the attentions which were showered upon us by General Prince Chaf-cha-vadsey our stay at Bodlith was rendered most agreeable, and the interest was quite surprising with which General Prince Orbeliani translated long conversations from French into Russian, regarding India and our conquests there, as well as the whole system of purchase in the British army, our Crimean campaign, and various political European questions. Every comfort and luxury attainable was placed at our disposal—even to Persian insect-powder being placed round our beds, to ward off any discomfort we might meet with from insects—owing to which our night's rest was most refreshing.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

FROM BODLITH TO WEDDEN.

About nine A.M. we left Bodlith. We were rather late in starting, but in these mountains it was not too hot to ride through the middle of the day, even in August. There was no day since we left England more full of interest than this. The first village which we passed through was named Mahasu: singularly enough, the last time that I was at a village of the same name it was near Simla, in the Himalayas, at a very pleasant party with Lord Elgin, when he related the most interesting anecdotes regarding his Chinese experiences.

Continuing our journey up the hill, we arrived at the mountain village, near a camp of Russian soldiers at Tandoo. An escort of honour, consisting of a naib, or under officer, and two men, had been ordered to accompany us throughout Daghestan. These men were mounted on smart little ponies, and were most picturesquely dressed and armed; their weapons being thickly inlaid with silver highly embossed and chased, the workmanship of which would do credit to any of the best shops in London or Paris; this is entirely done by native mountaineer workmen, who reside in a district called Kasi Koomook, the mountains of which we now saw in the extreme distance, and especially at Koorbachi, a strong town, situated between high mountains, apparently thirty or forty miles south of Guinib. Its inhabitants used to call them-

selves Franks; they are descended, it is supposed, from certain workmen, whom the Genoese Republic, when it was in the plenitude of its power, and possessed establishments on the Caspian, had sent out to utilise the metals found in the mines. Being men of great skill and industry, they not only kept up their own knowledge, but taught the native inhabitants. On the decline of the Genoese Republic and the spread of the Turks and Tartars, these men were shut in from the coast and lost in the mountains of the Caucasus; but, retaining the skill of their ancestors, they kept up both the beauty of the design and the perfection of its execution, transmitting it to their descendants of this day.

In Shamyl's wars, he turned the skill of these mountain artists towards the perfection of the rifle, much to the injury of Russia; and while Europe, with all its skilful engineers, its wealth, and progress, was fighting its battles with the antiquated smooth bore, these clever people were supplying Shamyl and his army with excellent rifled firearms. It was probably these men that Shamyl employed to cast his brass cannon, which we saw on the parade at Guinib, and also to coin what money was current within the territory which paid obedience to him. Having no especial coinage of their own, they imitated with scrupulous fidelity such foreign coins as they thought most convenient, giving to each of them, in all integrity, the weight, size, and standard of the original.

Most of the best workmanship in daggers and arms of all kinds sold in Tiflis is, I was informed, purchased from Kasi Koomook, being sent over the mountains, viâ Kahiti, the price being probably doubled by grasping Armenian shopkeepers.

This craggy range presents, apparently, all the conditions which an ibex-hunter could desire; and although all my inquiries failed to obtain satisfactory information on this subject, yet, from the number of ibex horns I saw in Bodlith, and from other circum-

stances, I am inclined to believe that a sportsman would be well rewarded for his trouble and exertion in these mountains. I do not think that stags would be found there, because there are no wooded ranges to shelter them. The forests commence still further to the west and south-west of Bodlith, and in them, report says, plenty of large game is to be met with.

On reaching the summit of the pass, over the first high mountain after leaving Bodlith, we saw a magnificent snowy range, about seventy miles distant, in the direction of Kahiti; in which they said there were plenty of Ourial or wild sheep, and also ibex. We were here much surprised to see at least fifty Cossack militia drawn up in line ready to receive us. This was a very handsome compliment on the part of General Prince Chafcha-vadsey, as we had expressed a wish, if possible, to see these Tartar horsemen, so renowned for the skill which they display on horseback.

I was received on the edge of the mountain by the officer in command, and rode down the line inspecting both men and horses. The men were dressed in white or dark clothes, according to their own pleasure, but all exactly of the same cut and form. Their arms consisted of a rifle, sword, pistol, and long dagger; the sword is slung from the shoulder; the rifle is carried in a case, and is slung over the back; the pistol is always carried exactly in the centre of the back of the horseman, and is in this position extremely handy to one accustomed to it; and the long dagger is ready for instant use in the girdle at his left side. The cartridge-cases are slipped into plaits sewed in the bosom of the coat, and the ammunition in them is fitted into beautifully wrought cases of silver or gilt metal, jet or ivory. These horsemen of the mountains never carry lances. Their saddles and bridles were of the usual Tartar type, common from the east of China as far west as the Crimea, except that the stirrup-irons were

tied loosely together under the belly of the horse—an arrangement which I had never previously observed, but which, as we shall presently see, very materially assisted them in their feats of horsemanship.

Filing off from the right of the troop, one half of the horsemen rapidly took position in our front, the remainder in rear. No sooner was this manœuvre completed than those in advance broke into a wild gallop along the mountain road, and notwithstanding its narrowness, with a deep precipice on one side, they tore along in a close thick *mêlée*, some standing on their saddles, others bending under the bellies of their horses, firing and loading their pistols and their rifles as they advanced. Arriving at some tolerably flat ground, these wild horsemen took the opportunity to throw their sheepskin caps into the air, and wheeling round picked them up from the ground, leaning from their horses while at full gallop, repeating this in consecutive wheels dozens of times.

We were very much struck by these extraordinary feats, surpassing all that I had read of them in the accounts of previous travellers. They seemed regardless of what sort of ground they went over; stones, rugged holes, ditches, nothing seemed to interfere with the power with which they commanded their horses, the firmness of their grasp, or the skill they displayed at these games. These horsemen frequently leaned over, when at full gallop, even to pick up stones from the ground; and now became apparent the reason of their stirrup-irons being tied together, for the foot being firmly locked in the stirrup, the union of the one stirrup with the other prevented the body from overbalancing, and thus these flexible-limbed men were dragged along, as it were, with their heads downwards. They next made pretence as if they were defeated, and were using every endeavour to escape from their vanquishers; when suddenly having drawn them beyond

a judicious limit, they wheeled round upon their pursuers, and became in turn the attacking party.

The Tartars are certainly wonderful horsemen, for, although their saddles are very difficult to mount into, and their horses are always encumbered with many bags, straps, etc., and generally, in addition to their arms, they wear heavy coats, yet they mount their horses, indifferently on either side, with great agility, and never appear to tire in the saddle. In this description of horsemanship they far excelled anything of the kind which is practised in India; for, although in swordmanship, and certainly in the practice with the lance, the men of Col. Probyn's and Fane's horse, both of which were under my divisional orders in India, would far excel them, yet in daring riding or agility the Lesghians could not be excelled.

The best horses are not bred in the mountains, but are purchased near the lake Karaban, near Erivan, on the frontier of Persia, and are soon trained to mountain use. The best Tartar saddles are purchased for about twenty roubles, or three pounds each. Those who are accustomed to ride in them can use no other, but to anyone else the pain they cause is excessive. Upon the saddle-tree are set two almost upright pieces of wood, not more than twelve inches apart, a small pillow covered with leather is placed on this, the stirrup-leather being fixed well back; the figure, therefore, is compelled to balance itself forward, and sits in a vice. The pain endured when obliged to ride many consecutive hours in this machine no one can imagine. On removing the pillow, which serves the rider for his head at night, the saddle makes a very excellent pack-saddle for the transport of luggage, and, from the arrangement of blankets beneath it, the horses have seldom or never sore backs.

On arriving at a convenient dell in the mountains, near a stream, the horsemen all dismounted; and an excellent luncheon,

provided by the kind forethought of Prince Orbeliani, was spread upon the grass. During its preparation mimic games were enacted by the men, such as shooting their enemies and then cutting their throats. But their envy seemed aroused at the sight of my revolver, which seemed to them never to cease its fire.

I was afterwards exceedingly vexed with myself for an omission which I made in not inviting the native officer to lunch with us. He was a Mahomedan, and in India it would have been considered rather an insult than otherwise, as no Mussulman servant will even touch the meat of a Christian. Here, however, wiser customs prevail; and I deeply regretted that not being well versed in them I had omitted the usual compliment which is paid by the Russian officers towards these natives, an omission which I am much afraid may have given annoyance to this attentive and noble-looking native Naib.

About two P.M. we reached the Lake of Ai-si-lam, or Forelli, the trout lake: it is about two miles long by about half a mile wide, of a winding shape, and very beautifully situated. Having ridden to the west end of it, we dismounted in front of a tent, which Prince Nakasudjee had sent for our use from Honsak, about eighty or ninety versts distant, with his servants to attend upon us, a good dinner, bedding, etc.

I had brought from London one of Brown's spinning-devils, which I was anxious to try in the streams and lakes of the Caucasus. We therefore made inquiries whether we could procure a boat, and we were told that one had lately been brought from Petrolvks in case his Imperial Majesty might desire to row on the lake. This boat, however, proved to be of such a cranky build that it was positively dangerous to be in her, and we were obliged almost by force to keep the man who tended it, a Russian soldier, sitting at the bottom; for so inexperienced

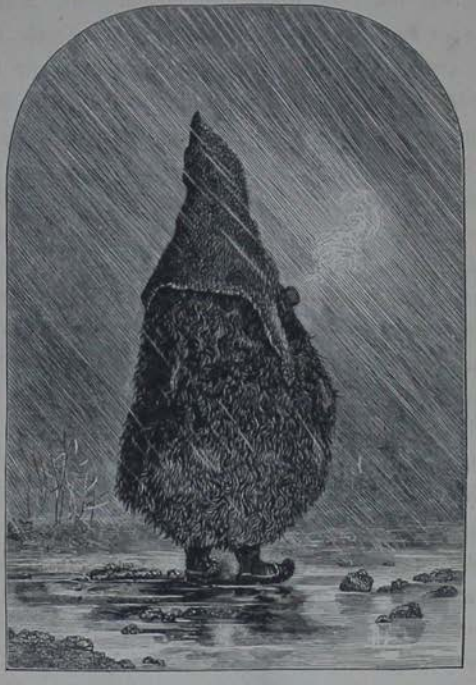
was he that more than once he was within an ace of upsetting it, and actually did so when we allowed him to move, which was not until we were close in shore. I feel confident that his Imperial Majesty, with the blood of Peter the Great in his veins, will not trust himself in such a craft. Putting the soldier-sailor on shore, we launched out into Forelli lake, and moving parallel to the shore, for about an hour, we tried our spinning-tackle, but whether for want of wind or on account of an impending storm, I know not, but nothing looked at our London devil.

We were told that sudden changes in these mountains were not uncommon, but we were scarcely prepared, when the clouds ominously darkened while we were on the lake, and a storm of hail fell such as I rarely remember to have seen in my life; but I dare not mention the size of the Caucasian hailstones beyond saying that I mistook them for small fish jumping out of the water. Much to the wonder of the natives, on our landing from the boat, although our clothes were as thin as muslin, not one drop of rain had come through them; they looked at the inside of our cloaks, and could scarcely believe their senses when they found them perfectly dry, while with their woollen coats they were drenched to the skin. Our well-made thin Macintoshes quite astonished them; but their consternation at my air pillow knew no bounds, and when I had shown them the way it was filled, they one after another played it as a sort of bagpipe for a considerable portion of the evening.

We shared our dinner with our Naib or native officer. He was a most charming old man, of the name of Ogli-Ghirik, from the district of Angessi. He was most attentive to us during the two days he attended us. These mountaineers, though bigoted Mussulmans, are not very particular about ceremonies, and will eat out of the same dish as a Christian; nay, more, if

none of their companions are looking, will drink a little fire-water.

Night now came on. We had been warned by Prince Orbeliani of the dreadful cold we should certainly suffer in these mountains,



A LESGHIAN SOLDIER.

and especially by the side of the Lake Forelli. And so it proved; for in spite of the beds and bedding which he and others of our kind friends had sent for our use, and although I slept not only in all my clothes, but also added my coats and cloaks, yet I have not passed so painful a night since one in the Himalayas, where

I slept near the summit of a pass thirteen thousand feet high, where a running stream froze hard during the night. About twelve of our guards, however, slept outside, wrapped in their cloaks and bashlik head-pieces, and apparently without minding the cold at all.

Leaving our tent early in the morning of the 29th of August, and taking the road to Wedden, we were glad of the sun, much as we had endeavoured for the last two months to shun this fiery god. Our old friend Ogli was most attentive to us, for when he learned that two peasants with their horses, who had carried our baggage the preceding day, had run off rather than proceed so far from their own village, he directed one of his own Sowars to carry all of it on his own horse. The man walked the entire thirty versts, and his astonishment was great at our presenting him with a couple of roubles for what to us was a really valuable and essential service. I was this day mounted upon a very unpleasant horse. For the last twenty versts, although we rode by the side of an ugly precipice, my brute shied at every stone and stick, each time approaching fearfully near the edge, upon the newly thrown-up earth; and notwithstanding my having been accustomed to ride in the most dangerous paths in the Himalayas, I own I was very uncomfortable all the morning.

It is certainly wonderful what the Russians have effected in the shape of roads through these mountains, justly considering them the great means of bringing about the civilization of the country. Road-making in this country appears to have many faults, the most obvious of which is that the retaining wall is too upright, and frequently has no other foundation than the sliding earth. I cannot but believe that if a clever English engineer, thoroughly accustomed to mountain-road making, were to offer his services in the Caucasus they would be gladly accepted, for the money which is being expended is enormous, and much of it

wasted from want of proper skill. The Emperor is to take this road next month; and one hundred and eighty horses are to be in readiness for his thirty carriages at every station; the sum of three hundred and twenty thousand roubles, or about forty-three thousand pounds sterling, being allotted to the expense of posting the Imperial party during their stay in the Caucasus. Before arriving at Wedden there is a long descent down the mountain, from which some far-stretching defiles can be seen towards the north-east. It was in these difficult mountain recesses that the Russian army suffered so severely at the hands of Shamyl.

In 1852 the Emperor Nicholas wrote peremptory orders to Prince Waronzoff to attack the Lesghians. In obedience to this command, but against his own opinion, he advanced with an army of about five thousand men, into the defiles, giving orders that a convoy of provisions and munitions of war should follow him. This convoy was attacked, and three general officers, forty officers of inferior rank, and every single soldier were killed. Waronzoff was left in the mountains without provisions or ammunition. In this strait he had no resource but to cut his way out, in which feat the sufferings of the troops were most dreadful. An expert Circassian mountain warrior was concealed behind every rock, not armed with the black-stocked Russian musket, but with a deadly Circassian rifle. For some days the Russian force made but two or three versts per day in their retreat. General Zedlinsky told me that on one occasion he saw fourteen men killed in their endeavour to procure a calf for food, and a cup of water from the river could only be purchased at the risk of life. At last the Prince, with a small remnant of followers, was enabled to reach the plain, whence he wrote his despatch to the Emperor, couched in these terms: "Your Imperial Majesty's orders have been executed, and your army has perished." I never could rightly ascertain what was the loss in this fatal

campaign, but it was scarcely less untoward than that of our army in Affghanistan, in 1842. In this expedition were employed Baron Nicolaef, now Governor of the district of Tiflis, also General Prince Mirsky and General Zedlinsky, from all of whom I received much kindness and attention at Tiflis.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE FORT OF WEDDEN.

About noon we passed the site of the native village Dargi Vedemmo, which was held for a considerable time by the eldest son of Shamyl, and defended successfully for seven months against the repeated attacks of the Russians. It is situated at the entrance of a gorge of the mountains, and is about two miles distant from the fort of Wedden, which has been named after it. It was in this village that the Princess Chafchevadsey and the Princess Orbeliani were detained, waiting their ransom of forty thousand roubles, and the release of Shamyl's son. Shortly after midday we rode into the fort, and were courteously received by the Princess Errinsoff, in the absence of the General, her husband. She is a native of Tiflis, is very young; and if these pages ever meet her eye, I hope I may be pardoned if I am so personal as to remark that she is very handsome. She possesses a charming manner, speaks French perfectly, and kindly acted during the evening as an interpreter to her husband.

Towards the afternoon the prince returned from his inspection, and made us thoroughly welcome to his house. We spent a very pleasant afternoon; the whole party seemed to take a great interest in my son's sketch-book, which by this time was beginning to assume quite a bulky form, and were delighted to hear the account

of our progress, the whole of which we had always to go through, beginning from our start from London.

A desire was always politely expressed to know the object of our journey. It could not be mercantile, nor in any way relate to government affairs; they could scarce bring themselves to believe that it was purely for the interest of seeing new countries; but the ladies generally terminated their inquiries by saying, "Eh bien! les Anglais sont si originaux."

The Russian officers were especially desirous of knowing what was the reorganisation of the English army, which was making such a stir in the British parliament, and creating such interest among continental nations, and whether the abolition of purchase was not a democratic advance against our old institutions.

The whole system of our army had therefore to be explained, inclusive of the purchase system; a difficult subject enough even amongst English officers, and until lately quite misunderstood by civilians in our own country. It was interesting to see the readiness with which they grasped the various arguments on this intricate subject.

After an excellent supper, in which London porter or, as I looked upon it, the champagne of the Caucasus bore its part, we retired to rest, having bid adieu to Princess Errinsoff, whom we probably should not see in the morning, as we had arranged to start very early for Vladicavcas.

The usual family habits of the Russians appear to be to rise very late in the morning, and soon after to take tea with a simple biscuit in their bed-rooms, but not a set-down meal as with us. At one o'clock they dine, commencing their meal by eating, while standing at a side table, some caviare, sardines, or other salted provision, generally accompanied by a tiny glass of brandy, after which they sit down to soup and meat, etc., all of which are handed round by servants, nothing being carved upon the table;

wine is most plentifully served round, and, towards dessert, London porter, then all rise with the ladies. About four or five o'clock in the afternoon, and in fact continually during the day, hot tea is served up in tumblers, set in stands of filigree silver with sugar, but no cream or milk. This is exceedingly refreshing, both in very cold and very hot weather, and a taste for it is most readily acquired. The supper is not held until about ten o'clock at night; it is a repetition of the dinner.

As a rule the Russians keep very late hours, seldom retiring to bed before two or three in the morning, which naturally causes them to be late risers. Their habits may not be unsuited to the northern climate of St. Petersburg and Moscow, but are scarcely adapted to the trans-Caucasus, where the climate is such for the most part of the year, as to induce persons to adopt the native habits of rising very early, and taking a siesta during the heat of the day.

On the morning of the 30th August we left Wedden. The general had obtained for us the use of an officer's tarantass, and we hired horses. The distance to Grosnia, where the road by the base of the mountains joins that from the upper country, is about thirty versts. We started attended by two Cossacks, and passed through very beautiful scenery and magnificent forests, by the side of a fine stream, until we nearly reached the fort of Asseuri, which is twenty-two versts from Wedden.

The country on the banks of this stream was about the richest I have ever seen; the largest and most luxuriant hops festooned the lower trees; while the wild apple-trees, hazel nuts, vines, and hollyhocks mingling together, added to the natural richness of the scenery.

During our journey, which was continued at a rapid rate, our Cossack Tartar guards were relieved every five or six miles by others who were in stations by the road-side. At each of these

posts a stage is erected about twenty feet high, either on high poles or in trees. It is reached by a ladder, and carefully sheltered from the sun. From these the Cossacks watch every one who approaches, and the relieving escort are always mounted and ready to start, however fast the traveller may be proceeding.

We now passed some fine-looking country for shooting, and indeed subsequent inquiries induce me to believe that the best sport in the Caucasus is to be met with in this district.

We were now well out of Lesghia and Daghestan, and in the district of the Checkengis. We here struck into the main posting road in the plains, which joins Petrolvks on the Caspian Sea to the central town of Vladicavcas, which commands the great pass of Dariel through the centre of this stupendous range of mountains.

In visiting Daghestan we had made a divergence from the usual beaten track, but it proved the most interesting portion of our whole trip. Although this magnificent country is not very distant from England, no travellers from our shores think of prolonging their summer tours in this direction; but now that I have shown the facilities of reaching it, and travelling in it, and the hospitality we received, I feel sure that many excursionists who may by chance see these lines will follow our example, and will not regret that they have done so. To the geologist and the botanist new fields are open, which would well repay their labours; and for the artist the stupendous rocky scenery, wild and grand in the extreme, has no equal in the world. To us, Daghestan was, but a few weeks since, a terra incognita, surrounded by mysterious difficulties, respecting which no information could be obtained; but determination and perseverance overcame them all, and if we have opened a door by which others may enter, or shown another field for the summer excursion of the long vacation, it will add to the pleasure which we ourselves derived from our tour.

About 4 P.M. we arrived at Grosnia. Having passed through the town, we made our way to the house of the Commandant. I sent in my card, and also, as I imagined, my letter of "conduite," in order that it might be seen who we were. After some detention I was shown into the house, and met Colonel Grosman, the Commandant, who spoke little or no French. He seemed greatly puzzled by the papers I had sent in; he, however, requested us to proceed into another room, where we found a gentleman who was ill on his bed, but who spoke German, and from him my son, who spoke a little of that language, learned that Colonel Grosman could make nothing of the papers I had sent in. We then discovered that in our ignorance of the Russian language we had given in the passport of the coachman who ran away from us at Tsura, instead of our own letters. I now produced my Foreign Office passport and other credentials. They laughed heartily over the error which I had committed, and we at once destroyed the coachman's papers, lest it might occur again.

Colonel Grosman only followed the example of all whom we had met by offering us every hospitality in his power. We, however, were tired and travel worn, and considered it best to proceed at once to the hotel.

Not long after our arrival there, the Police Master presented himself to take our wishes as to our proceeding on our journey, and also Lieutenant Waldemar Dimitrioff had been directed by the Commandant to attend us, on account of his knowledge of French and English. At first we had thought of starting that night, but having been informed that we should meet with some detention at the next station for want of horses, we thought it better to remain at Grosnia. In the sequel we much regretted our decision, as it proved the cause of many detentions on the following day; and although by the special attention of the master

of the hotel I slept on his own bed, yet I had no rest during the whole night from the attacks of the numerous little tormenting companions which he left to enjoy my company.

At six the next morning we were up and waiting for the pericordinia, or open cart, which had been provided for us. At seven it arrived at the door, and although we had stipulated and paid a small sum to secure no change of carriages, as far as Nasam, one stage from Vladicavcas, yet the driver informed us that he had received orders to turn us out of this carriage at the next stage. We therefore proceeded at once to the master of the post, who declared that the carriage could not go the whole distance. We showed him our receipt, in which, however, the bargain we had made was not inserted. This had evidently been done either through deceit or negligence, and it was fortunate we discovered it. We then threatened to appeal at once to the Commandant, when, seeing we were determined, he gave way and consented to place his signature to the document, giving the orders we wished. This detention delayed us an hour.

Before proceeding we purchased about three pounds of beautiful black grapes in the market for the sum of four copecks, or 1¼*d.* in English money. The market, in general, seemed well supplied, and at prices exceedingly moderate. The best meat was less than 3*d.* per pound, wild boar and venison equally cheap, pheasants 1*s.* the pair, partridges 9*d.*, and wild duck 4½*d.*, and bread about 2*d.* the four-pound loaf.

The driving of the post-boys is apparently most reckless, and yet they seldom get into any difficulties. In crossing the market-place at a most furious pace, the half-broken horses being mad with the noise of the whip, we ran over a pig, the driver grinning at the dexterity with which he could do this without upsetting the Telega. I may here mention that the Cheekengies stop their horses by the same noise (phurr-phurr) which is used

for that purpose by the Tartars, and universally in Ireland, but never by the Lesghians.

Before leaving Grosnia we made inquiries as to the general state of the country and the conduct of the inhabitants immediately below the mountains; from which, a few years since, parties of mountaineers would suddenly emerge, rob and plunder, and dash back to their fastnesses, into which no one could pursue them. We were informed, by an officer stationed there, that now robberies on the highway seldom occurred, but that they had not entirely ceased, for even during the last month, three men had been shot by the camp sentries while they were attempting to steal the regimental horses at the station.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

FROM GROSNIA TO VLADICAVCAS.

Soon after leaving Grosnia, a succession of tumuli, evidently very ancient, came in view on either side of the road. They closely resembled those which are so numerous at Kertch in the Crimea, and which when opened have so well rewarded the searches of the antiquary; none of these, however, seem to have been disturbed.

On reaching the first station, Al-han-yurt, we saw some beautiful heads of the royal stag, but the owners did not seem to prize them much, for they demanded only five shillings each for them, a proof that they must be common. We also saw a fine skin of a brown bear, another proof to the sportsman that large game of the first class cannot be uncommon here. These stag heads appeared quite as large as any we had killed in the Himalayas, and very much larger than any I had seen in Scotland, and were from the genuine royal stag. On leaving Al-han-yurt our route lay over an open plain of grass, with low cultivated hills and brushwood interspersed with marshy ground, while at a distance of about five miles were lowish mountains covered with timber, the whole country bearing the peculiar stamp of being well suited to large game. This country would be perfect for the Indian sport of pig-sticking, but this has not yet been in-

troduced. It abounds with wild boars, and, indeed, the pigs which we saw in the villages, from their wicked appearance, long snouts, and dark hairy backs, showed that they belong far more to the wild species, than to their fat chubby relatives in China.

There was a good deal of rain falling in the mountains, which foreboded bad weather for some days; and so it proved, much to our discomfort. This indicated the end of the hot summer season, after which this country is blessed with an autumn which in no part of the world can be surpassed, and which, in fact, is the true time to seize upon for travelling through it. Near each village hundreds of natives were employed in clearing weeds and grass off the roads, which, however, consisted of nothing more than a track through the plain.

The Russian settlers appear here to have intermingled with the natives, which certainly will tend towards improving the personal appearance of their offspring, the Russians being coarse-featured in a degree scarcely credible, whereas the Circassians are generally very handsome men.

Not far from the neighbouring town of Sa-mark-ki I was told that there is a village called Mick-hai-lof, the vicinity of which is considered to be the best sporting-ground in this part of the country. Deer, bears, and wild boar are said to abound there. The look of this country promises everything an ardent sportsman could desire.

The usual cost of posting in a common pericordinia, taking all the different items into account, may be reckoned at about fourteen roubles for one hundred versts—*i.e.*, 2*l.* for seventy-five miles, or about 6½*d.* per mile. In private carriages, especially if with springs, the charge is augmented, because, in consequence of these carriages being heavier, the postmaster generally orders more horses to be taken, the decision regarding the number of horses resting with him. A courier padarogna, or posting order,

gives authority to the traveller to insist on no detention whatever; but this is only given to high government officers, to couriers, or in consideration of the payment of double the usual posting price.

I must now explain of what kind are the post-chaises of Russia. At every station in the whole of this immense Empire may be found small open carts, called pericordinias. They are strong little vehicles, rather small, and entirely without springs. Into this the sturdy Russian traveller, sometimes with a little hay in the bottom, frequently without, flings himself, and travels for days and nights, apparently feeling no fatigue, and quite regardless of the horrid jolting for want of springs. Sometimes, but with great difficulty, a telega, or carriage set upon long wooden poles, which, to a small extent, act as springs, may be procured, which renders the journey slightly less unendurable than in the pericordinia. A carriage with springs, a sort of berlin, may sometimes be procured in the large towns, but for this an extra sum is demanded—more than double the usual charge. The orders of the Postmaster-General require that these post-carts should be changed at each station or stage, and as it is essential to those who cannot bear the shaking of these springless carts to have cords woven into a sort of network to sit or recline on, I recommend the traveller to use his utmost influence with the authorities of the town from which he starts, to obtain permission to select a good telega, and to take it to the farthest limit of his journey. There will generally be great objections, but if he perseveres it will be conceded; and when this is done, a paper should be obtained, stating this fact, otherwise the master of the post-house at the next station will treat the word of the traveller with small respect, and turn him out of his telega. In our case we owe much additional comfort to having taken the precaution to secure this before starting.

Continuing our journey towards Vladicavcas, we passed some military stations, and wherever such was the case, in the middle of the square or other convenient situation, we invariably found a gymnasium erected, for the use of the troops as well as of the young men of the station. These are not finished in the same expensive way in which we think it requisite to erect them in our schools of instruction; for instead of costing thousands, as with us, they here only cost a few pounds, and yet they possess all the essential and suitable requisites which I have been accustomed to see in our own; and whereas we only have them in some few large and central stations, the Russians possess them in every small town where three or four companies of soldiers are quartered.

We came in the afternoon to the village of Troy-e-taya, opposite to which is a natural fortress of considerable size, the most curious I ever saw, with ravelins and bastions apparently in regular order, and seemingly executed with much skill. But for its being commanded by higher ground in its rear, this natural configuration might be mistaken for the work of man.

Shortly before reaching Nasaan we passed through the most prosperous-looking native Tartar village we had yet seen. It was in the neatest order, which will, no doubt, give great pleasure to the discriminating eyes of the Emperor. The last twenty-six versts into Vladicavcas were extremely unpleasant. It was dark, and the weather was rainy, blowing, and very cold, the road also very rough, and we were heartily glad at nine in the evening to pass the triumphal arch, which was being erected in honour of the Emperor, at the entrance of the town.

We fortunately selected the best and most convenient hotel in the town—the Club House—where we met with every attention and civility, and where the charges were very moderate, especially

when it is remembered that the present exceptional circumstance of the great influx of strangers to meet his Imperial Majesty might have been taken advantage of, greatly to augment them. The hotel was entirely full; but here, as in many large Russian hotels, there was a strangers' room, common to all travellers, and free of charge, which on this occasion was unoccupied, and at our sole disposal. Running our chance of more visitors arriving, we were only too glad to occupy two of the wooden sofas in this room, and after supper to lie down as usual on our hard board, which, by this time, we had become altogether accustomed to, as we had only had two or three regular beds since leaving Odessa, more than a month previously.

On Friday, the 1st of September, about the time when hundreds of partridges were being bagged in Norfolk, we were astir. The weather was awfully wet, the streets one mass of mud; but we were compelled to exert ourselves, as we understood that in consequence of the expected arrival of his Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Michael, the Governor-General of the Caucasus, on his way from Tiflis to Petrolvks, to meet his brother the Emperor, an order had been given, that, as he and his suite would require all the post-horses on the road, private individuals could not proceed after twelve o'clock on this day. If, therefore, we did not start before that hour, we might be compelled to remain in this town for some days. We paid our respects to General Mellikoff, governor of the district, who received us most kindly, and said that unless superior orders had been sent from Tiflis, which he had no reason to anticipate, all our wishes in regard to post-horses should be accorded, and every facility afforded us. Like all the general officers whom we met in command in the Caucasus, we found General Mellikoff a comparatively young man in the full vigour of health and strength, and evidently a most intelligent officer.

We drove through the town, visiting the palace in which the Emperor was to reside. We saw some of the preparations for doing him honour; these were to cost the citizens twelve thousand roubles, to be defrayed by a house tax, but the said citizens were determined to reimburse themselves for this by charging strangers the sum of fifteen or twenty roubles per night for their beds during the time the Emperor might be there. We called also upon Mr. Upton, who is especially employed by his Imperial Majesty as architect. He is a son of Mr. Upton the Englishman who was so long in the Emperor's service, and who erected the magnificent works at Sebastopol, the docks, water course, etc., which were destroyed by the allied armies in 1855. Mr. Upton had resided many years at Petigorse, about two hundred versts distant, where exist the far-famed natural mineral springs of the Caucasus. Every description of mineral water is said to be found in that neighbourhood, in excellence at least equal to those of any of the springs in Germany or in France. It is stated by the Russians as a fact, that none which have been discovered in Europe, are wanting in this favoured locality, and the cures performed by them are said to be almost miraculous; but although they have not fallen off in repute, yet they are not so much visited as formerly, owing partly to the facilities which are now accorded to the Russians to visit the gayer watering-places in Germany, a permission formerly very difficult to obtain from the Emperor, and partly to the diminished revenues of the nobility since the emancipation of the serfs. I regretted extremely that we had not time to visit Petigorse, as it is so celebrated throughout Russia. We should also have much liked to have gone further into the mountains, in the direction of Elbrutz, the queen of the Caucasus, which is 18,493 feet high, a full and interesting account of which is given in the valuable and engaging work lately published by Mr. Freshfield. We should have liked

also to have visited the Kisti, that singular race of people who inhabit the mountains to the south of Vladicavcas, and who are said to have possessed in ancient times the virtues of hospitality in so high a degree, that their usages even commanded them to resign in favour of strangers the most sacred of domestic rights. In the mountain ranges of their country I am persuaded that very fine stalking of the large game of the forests must exist.

Before twelve o'clock an aide-de-camp from General Mellikoff paid his respects to us at the Club House. He had received directions that we should be provided with every document and order requisite to give us facilities in travelling, and allowed to select the tarantass which we thought the most convenient in the post house, and that this should be placed at our disposal for the whole journey; moreover, that an especial letter should be written to direct every attention to be paid to us on the road. We were very grateful for the consideration shown to us by General Mellikoff, who also expressed his regret that we could not stay to see some reviews, which were to take place about a week afterwards in a camp not many miles distant.

The public room, which we were still compelled to occupy, was now shared by a Swiss officer and his family. He appeared much put out with his journey of two days from Petigorsc with his young children, and more especially from being detained for want of horses, and compelled to share the common room in the hotel, which was certainly very disagreeable for a lady. In a friendly but somewhat excited way he expressed his surprise at our travelling for pleasure and amusement in such a country. He asked us if we had not comfortable houses at home, or if we had cross wives, or any other domestic affliction, that we should be so mad as to seek discomforts here; but when we assured him that coming for pleasure alone, we felt well repaid for our

trouble, he said the English were incorrigible,—that we were accused of being eccentric; but, "Mon Dieu, excuse me," he added, "to leave England and eat black bread in the Caucasus, that is nothing short of madness." There is no doubt that the love of adventure, of seeing foreign and distant countries, and of sporting which is ingrained in our nation, is seldom understood or appreciated by foreigners, and is very frequently attributed by them to some hidden motive which they cannot divine, or to madness.

When at Odessa we met a gentlemanly Frenchman, who was describing his travels in the gulf of Finland. He said that by far the most extraordinary thing he met with, was a company of Englishmen, who, dressed in flannel knickerbockers and red shirts, were living in tents on the banks of a river, their whole amusement consisting in thrashing the water with long rods, and when they succeeded, which they continually did, in catching a huge salmon, all they did was scrupulously to weigh it, and immediately to give it away to the poor people. These men, he said, were evidently well off; then why, he added, live this vagabond life, when all the pleasures of Paris were open to them? We were told by Viscount Figanière that when he had expressed his intention of leaving St. Petersburg on his journey south, he was told, "You will meet with nothing but dirt and discomfort; you had much better stay in your comfortable home."

Availing ourselves of the permission granted, we carefully selected a tarantass, or covered pericordinia, which we caused to be carefully adjusted with matting at the top and back, and lacing many yards of rope across it for seats, we made it as comfortable as possible. Our trouble in securing and arranging it was well repaid. The sequel will show that we took this carriage many hundreds of versts until we relinquished it at Tiriwilly,

on the railway to Poti. Thanking the aide-de-camp for his attention, and sending our respects to General Mellikoff, we mounted into our curious vehicle. Before leaving the post-office, failing to be understood in French, in despair I tried Hindostani, and to my astonishment a young clerk perfectly understood me. He, however, answered me in Persian, which I did not know.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

PASS OF DARIEL AND MOUNT KASBEC.

HAVING secured a supply of tea and sugar and a few small requisites from a shop that lay near, we started from Vladicavcas in a downpour of rain, and drove towards the famous pass of Dariel. Just outside the town we were stopped at a bridge by a huge bar of wood, painted with the Russian Imperial colours, which was balanced across the road. Fifty copecks was the toll, and a receipt was given, which I placed with my other papers.

Vladicavcas is surrounded by high mountains; the scenery in fine weather is said to be beautiful, but the clouds and mist prevented us from realising this. About ten versts from the town, the pass commenced to open out, and as the clouds lifted from the lower hills, the view became very fine. The Terek river, swollen into a torrent by the continuous rain, was rushing out of it. We soon after reached the post station of Balta, where we were told we must wait two hours for horses. On examination, however, of our letters, things were materially altered, and the horses were forthcoming at once—a practical demonstration of the value of the papers which had been given to us. We then galloped furiously to Lars, a station about sixteen versts up the valley, where we determined to rest for the night, in order to see the beauties of the pass by daylight. The postmaster said we must go on at once, as otherwise he could not furnish us with horses in the morning. When, however, he saw our letters, he told us we were at liberty

to have horses at any hour we wished. We therefore ordered them to be ready at 6 A.M.

The mountains on either side of this deep valley frequently appear as if they entirely closed the pass, rearing their lofty heads into the sky, and leaving scarce anything but a dark and dismal cavern, through which the road winds, following the windings of the impetuous river Terek. In the spring of the year awful

PASS OF DARIEL.

avalanches of snow have been known suddenly to descend, sweeping all before them, and destroying any unfortunate traveller that might chance to be on the road beneath. It is even said that

three or four versts of this pass have been in an instant entirely filled with snow many yards in depth.

The post station at Lars was very large and had many rooms in it, fitted up in the usual rough style common to the whole of Russia. These might be made very comfortable by bringing a light mattrass and a pillow, as all Russians do when travelling. The samovar, plates, cups, etc., are provided at a fixed price; eggs and milk and black bread could be procured, but everything else was left to our own resources. In this room, as usual, vermin were permitted to linger at pleasure, causing a very painful and restless night. It is certainly a great discredit to the Russians, that their hotels, their stations, and their steamers should be allowed to be overrun by these animals, which a small amount of cleanliness would entirely banish. In this respect they are very little superior to their much-despised neighbours the Turks or the Kalmucks. As regards private houses, I am unable to speak with any certainty, having had so few opportunities of testing them. Again, in most of the hotels the necessary convenience of a house is universally left in a very filthy and untidy state, quite unfit for the meanest person to enter. Much as I admire many qualities in the Russians, and great as was their kindness to us, I cannot refrain from speaking the truth on this point; a point upon which we in England are most particularly sensitive. We had scarcely entered our room at Lars when a very friendly Russian officer drove up to the station. He offered us refreshment of brandy, vodsky, etc., nor was he offended with us at declining it, but in each case he took it himself. We were astonished at the quantity of raw spirit which he imbibed, without being in the least intoxicated; but this indeed frequently excited our surprise while we were in this country.

During the night there was a continued driving up of carriages, quite like the old posting days of England, but both the carriages

and the road were very different. The Russians generally prefer travelling by night. They make their carriages as comfortable as possible, with beds and pillows, and for days and nights they post on through the wide plains of their country. The habit continues here in the Caucasus, although the roads constructed on the edge of ravines and precipices cannot be considered very safe during the darkness, more especially with the furious driving universally practised by the Isvostchick or coachman.

The morning of Saturday the 2nd of September broke, provokingly, with a steady drizzling rain, and thick clouds enveloping the mountains down to their base. We could not wait for the chance of its clearing, but hoping it would do so, we determined to proceed, and, if needs be, content ourselves with seeing the pass of Dariel and the rushing Terek, although the magnificent mountains, and especially the Kasbec, might be hidden from our view. At half-past six we were again in our tarantass. This name, I may here remark, is most appropriately derived from the dance so called. After driving about six versts we crossed the Terek by a wooden bridge, and, judging that no more beautiful view of this gorge would present itself, we stopped the driver to sketch. He waited patiently for some minutes, when he insisted that he must go on; this was the time therefore to administer a few copecks, forty of which, or about one shilling and fourpence, calmed his impatience.

About half-way to Kasbec we passed the fort of Dariel, so noted in the wars of the Russians with the mountaineers. Here an Imperial painted bar of wood across the road barred our progress, and a corporal demanded something, which from our ignorance of the Russian language we could not understand. My son going into the fort met an officer, who when he saw our letters immediately gave directions that we should proceed. In the meantime, however, it struck me that in the magnitude of this country one

painted bar, although fifty versts distant from another, might still have some affinity to it. So I routed out the paper given at the bridge near Vladicavcas, at the sight of which the corporal showed much delight, and opened the door free of payment.

The fort of Dariel is not large, but strongly built; it is situated about half-way down the ravine. It is commanded on all sides by steep mountains, up the sides of which, however, it would be extremely difficult for an enemy to draw up cannon. It must be a dull residence for the officers on duty.

About twelve we arrived at Kasbec station; alas! the magnificent mountain was shut out from our view by tantalising clouds, which one moment seemed inclined to clear away altogether, and the next moment enshrouded the mountain in a deeper mantle than ever.

We determined to remain at Kasbec for at least twenty-four hours, in the hope that during that time we might get a glimpse of the mountain. We chanced to be at the station door when a Russian travelling carriage of huge proportions, and drawn by eight horses, drove up. Some ladies were sitting outside in front, smoking their cigarettes, and enjoying the view of the pass, having placed their servants inside. We got into conversation, and they were much surprised when they found us to be Englishmen, who, they stated, very seldom visited this country. But their astonishment knew no bounds when we told them we intended to pass one day or even two in this wild glen, in the bare hope of beholding the mountain. How eccentric, they exclaimed, that you should prefer seeing this huge mass covered with snow to the gay and beautiful Tiflis! We told them that probably our detention would not be long, and that as there was a northerly wind blowing, we should possibly see the mountain ere nightfall, and after all reach Tiflis as soon as they would. Both these expectations were indeed verified; for as we watched from our window

which faced the mountain, just as the moon rose, the clouds for a few moments disappeared, and the glorious Kasbec, arrayed in her new white mantle, appeared before us. The sight was truly sublime; in a few minutes it was gone again. Eventually, in consequence of the detention of post-horses for the Grand Duke Michael, and the benefit which we derived from our letters, we arrived in Tiflis at the same time as the gay party and their large carriage.

The morning of the 3rd of September broke with most glorious weather, the northerly wind having dissipated all the clouds. The morning sun upon Mount Kasbec was the most gorgeous sight imaginable; the mountain exactly in front of us, where yesterday had been nothing but a deep mass of impenetrable clouds, appeared in all its magnificence.

A sketch of this beautiful object by my son was at once secured, lest an unhappy change of weather, by no means of rare occurrence in these mountains, should again hide it from our view. Kasbec is sixteen thousand five hundred and thirty-two feet above the level of the Black Sea. This mountain is never entirely free from snow, and it was now covered apparently one-fourth down. The thermometer in our verandah now stood below thirty, the rain of the previous day being frozen into ice. A great change, when so lately it had stood in our rooms at Sebastopol, even in the morning and evening, at ninety-four and ninety-five.

On the previous evening we had made arrangements for the hire of two horses to ride up the mountain as far as the old Armenian church of Gruizin, which they said would occupy us about two hours. They demanded for each horse a rouble, which we agreed to pay. At six this morning they came and said it was two roubles for each horse. I may mention that a circumstance of this kind was by no means rare; that when we

had made a bargain, and they had promised to fulfil it at a certain time, when that time arrived, and they saw us in a difficulty, they doubled their former demand. Now, in many countries when they see a stranger in a fix, they impose upon him; and certainly in the British islands we are not free from this caprice; but when a bargain is made, I have seldom found in any country but Russia an increase made at the moment of its fulfilment. It is therefore as well that strangers should know what they are continually liable to in this respect. Again at seven we asked for our horses: "In half-an-hour you shall have them," was the answer. We waited this time impatiently; the only reply we next got to our inquiry was: "Sichas," "sichas," which, translated, is "directly," "immediately." Our previous experience led us at once to know that the time of their arrival was now perfectly indefinite. Let strangers beware of the word "sichas;" it is used upon all occasions, and at all times; but the definite period meant to be represented by "sichas" I could never discover. Time rolled on, and we had almost given up the ascent of the base of the Kasbec, when about ten o'clock two small ponies arrived at the door of the station-house. We crossed the river Terek, and then passing through a village, where we were fiercely attacked by some enormous dogs, as large and of somewhat the same breed as those of St. Bernard, we commenced the ascent of the mountain. In various places we saw quarries of tolerable slate, but they were badly worked. The Tartars here, as elsewhere, build the roofs of their houses flat, and cover them with a coat of earth at least ten or twelve inches thick, which they occasionally use as gardens, wherein to grow small vegetables. The Russians, however, in this as in other mountain districts which they possess, cover their houses with plates of iron, no doubt to prevent their being maliciously set on fire.

The inhabitants of this country are the men of Ghuiget. They

are Armenian Christians, seldom wear arms, and are more docile than the inhabitants of the northern range of the Caucasus, who are mostly Mohammedans. Three-quarters of an hour brought us up to the ancient Armenian church of Gruizin. It is evidently

CONVENT CHURCH NEAR KASBEC.

of great antiquity ; it is of stone, of most picturesque architecture, beautifully and elaborately worked in curious arabesque and other designs. Entrance into the interior of this church was obtained in a singular manner. Two men, who appeared in some way to have charge of the premises, fetching a ladder from a neighbouring building, mounted by it to the roof of the church, and entering by one of the upper windows, unfastened from within a very curious and massive old door, thickly studded with

iron. We entered; there was nothing very particular in the interior, excepting its evident antiquity, and a singularly beautiful pair of silver doors, four feet high by three feet broad, on which was recorded the life of our Saviour. These were certainly of great value, and as neither the church nor the neighbouring buildings appeared to be inhabited, could easily have been carried away. Doubtless religious veneration protected them. Even the money-box, which was on the exterior of the church door, was considered quite safe.

From this ancient church not only is there a splendid view of the mountain of Kasbec, but also of another mountain farther west, within a few feet as high, and covered in an equal degree with snow. From this position we could fairly trace the way by which Mr. Freshfield and his companions ascended the mountain, and could fully appreciate the difficulties which they must have encountered in that laborious adventure. Having copied the patterns of some of the ornaments, and having taken another sketch of Kasbec from this point of view, we again descended. We had not reached the bottom before the glorious mountain was again shrouded in thick clouds, and not a vestige of its snowy summit was to be seen. We were, therefore, exceedingly fortunate in having remained this day, for, like Mount Blanc in Switzerland, the summit of Mount Kasbec is frequently invisible for weeks together.

In consequence of the expected arrival of his Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Michaël this afternoon at Kasbec, we were detained for post-horses until after he had passed, the postmaster having been prohibited from granting them for six hours previous to his arrival. This detention, however, in the sequel proved of an immense advantage to us in the benefits which we derived from an interview with the Grand Duke, which I propose to record in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE GRAND DUKE MICHAEL.

At 4 p.m. his Imperial Highness the Grand Duke arrived in an open britska and four, the advance of which we had watched for the last two miles, proceeding at the furious pace adopted by all travellers of consequence throughout Russia. His Imperial Highness descended at the hotel, and whilst the relay of horses was being prepared, he graciously accorded me an interview. I was glad to have the opportunity of thanking him for all the kindness I had received in his government, and for the hospitality with which we had been treated, as well as for the facilities of movement which had been at all times extended to us during our journey. He said that he had received notice of my intended visit to his government from General Aide-de-Camp Kutzebut, Governor-General of Bessarabia and the Crimea, as also from Baron Ignatief, Russian Ambassador at the Court of the Sultan; that he had expected me to arrive as travellers usually do, by the way of Poti, in Imeritia, and was astonished to find me in the heart of the mountains of the Caucasus. He was delighted, however, to see me, and desired to know where I had been, and to what part of his government I proposed next to proceed. He expressed his regret that the obligations I was under to return home would prevent my being presented to the

Emperor, and witnessing the fêtes, reviews, and receptions that were about to take place. He was pleased to add that he regretted he could not receive me at his country residence at Borjome, near Suram, in consequence of his absence; but that if I should pass by that way, on my return to Europe, he assured me of a kind welcome and reception from the Grand Duchess. I mention these facts as a proof of his kindness and good feeling towards my countrymen, represented, in this case, by myself, an officer of Her Majesty's army. I expressed my gratitude for the honour he had done me, and my unwillingness to detain him in a lengthened interview. He hastily took leave of me, with kind expressions, and mounting his carriage he started at the usual furious gallop, attended by half-a-dozen well-mounted Cossacks flying around him at the same pace. Previous to his leaving I saw him whisper a few words of command to one of the superior officers of his staff, who hastily wrote a short order in pencil, which he left with the master of the station, with directions that it should be delivered to us immediately after his departure. This paper being written in Russian we did not understand its purport and value, but subsequently we found it to contain an order directing us to have all the advantages of especial government couriers; and, consequently, throughout the remainder of our tour in the government of the Caucasus we always obtained post-horses without any detention. I need not add that the honour that he did me was entirely without solicitation on my part; but I looked upon it as a handsome compliment to my country and profession. The cold this evening was excessive, as we were under the influence of the snows of Mount Kasbec.

The post-boy sent with us had just brought the Grand Duke. He was dressed in a very picturesque but singular costume: a long brown coat and a hat curiously shaped—very like those re-

presented as worn by priests in the days of Queen Elizabeth—black in colour and square at the top, with a leather belt round his waist, curiously set round with silver buttons.

One great fault in Russian posting is the time they take in changing horses. During the period we travelled in the Caucasus the most rapid change they made by day was in sixteen minutes, and by night never under half-an-hour. So much time is thus lost, as well as in the occasional stoppages to regulate the harness, that, although they drive very rapidly, a rapid rate of posting throughout is never secured.

As we had already lost some time, and our days were limited, we considered it requisite to continue our travelling by night. Although it was exceedingly dark, and we were not provided with lamps, our road appeared to be passing some dangerous precipices; but this seemed to make no difference in the rate of driving, both the driver and the horses were well acquainted with the way, and we went down these steep hills with swiftness and confidence.

Near Milkhetti, once the capital of Georgia, we passed the fourth toll-bar, paying one rouble and forty copecks, or about four shillings. We continually passed most curious old stone churches, most of them built after the same design as that of Gruizin, but few so highly ornamented in their stonework. The scenery now very much resembled that of the lower Himalayas, very luxuriant, but wanting in the grandeur of the upper mountains. The river Adaha accompanied us, rushing over its stony bed down the pass to join the Kurr. A great deal of agricultural labour was going on, and on several occasions I saw ploughs at work with sixteen oxen harnessed to them. All the telegraph-posts were of iron, English made, and strung with English wire. The country generally appeared scorched and burned, the effect of an unusually hot summer, showing that we were prudent in

having chosen the northern route to enter Georgia, otherwise we should have encountered the full force of the heat of Tiflis, which is renowned for being the hottest city in the Russian dominions. Whenever Tiflis is mentioned a remark is made regarding its great heat, and this year it was considered to have exceeded its usual high temperature. Near Milkhetti we passed some rocks with singular chambers cut in them, which had evidently been formerly inhabited, resembling, to a certain extent, the excavated chambers at Inkerman, in the Crimea.

About five miles before we reached Tiflis we had a fine view of the city. The river Kurr, a really noble river, ran through the plain and thence into the heart of the city. We passed a number of large waggons heavily laden with merchandise for the north, chiefly, as I understood, the produce of Persia, carpets, etc., etc., for St. Petersburg. These carts were painted in bright and flowery colours, similar to those bought in our toy-shops. The dress of the people was gay and curious, and perfectly different from the dress of those on the other side of the mountains. Preparations to do honour to his Imperial Majesty appeared on all sides. A large camp was in course of preparation, triumphal arches were being erected, etc., etc.

Entering Tiflis we drove at once to the Hôtel de l'Europe and secured rooms. We here found ourselves surrounded by European comforts and even luxuries, such as we had not experienced for many days, and the more appreciable after the hard journey which we had undergone. At the hotel we were agreeably surprised to meet many of those friends whose acquaintance we had made in the earlier portion of our travels in the Crimea. They again endeavoured to give us every assistance in their power. General Zedlinsky, commanding a brigade of cavalry, telegraphed to Prince Mirsky, commanding the army in the trans-Caucasus, and also to Baron Nicolaef, to inform them that we had arrived; and

we at once received invitations to their country houses, which were some twelve or fourteen miles distant. Thus the attention and hospitality which we had received on the northern side of the Caucasus, began to be repeated on the southern side also.

TIFLIS, THE CAPITAL OF GEORGIA. P. 257.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE CITY OF TIFLIS.

THE city of Tiflis is of great extent, and picturesquely situated beneath high mountains, on the banks of the beautiful and noble Kurr. It ought to be healthy, as it stands five hundred feet above the level of the Black Sea. But the heat is excessive in the summer, owing to its enclosed position shutting out the [illegible] breezes. It is also very cold in winter. It suffers from [illegible] of having little or no drinking water except [illegible] is allowed to be polluted with all the filth of a [illegible]. Although meat and bread are not so dear as with us, yet their quality is inferior, and the price of European luxuries and articles of all kinds is so excessive, that living is as dear in this capital as in London or Paris.

It is divided into quarters, which in their character are totally distinct in every way. The superior quarter is inhabited by the dominant Russians, the masters of the country. In the centre of the city stands the grand opera-house; in the great square the European shops, hotels, etc. From thence a very handsome street leads past the Grand Ducal Palace to the post-office, above which street are numerous well-built houses and public offices. The Ducal Palace is a handsome and extensive building in the very best part of the city; attached to it are extensive gardens, the whole worthy of the high position held by the Governor-

General of the Caucasus. The salary of the Grand Duke was stated to be seventy thousand pounds a year. This is large, yet by no means excessive for the duties and expenses of his high position, and the hospitalities expected of him. It is said that he is exceedingly generous, and expends his whole salary in his government. In the winter season large public entertainments, balls, and dinners follow in rapid succession. There is no one who is not a recipient of his noble hospitality. A museum stands opposite to the palace. The collection does the greatest credit to the country, and to its curator, Dr. Gustave Radde; it is very scientifically arranged. The way in which the wild animals, which are found in the Caucasus, are grouped, deserves especial commendation, and is well worthy of being copied in much more extensive museums. Dr. Radde is a most energetic and zealous professor, wonderfully well acquainted with everything relating to this country.

Tiflis possesses some fine bridges, especially the one near the statue of Prince Waronzoff, on the road leading to the German quarter. Really when all these works are taken into consideration, and the money which Russia must have expended upon this city, and her numerous recent conquests, we are compelled to admire her energy, and to respect her for the civilisation which she is extending to various districts, which for many ages have been the very centre of anarchy and rapine, while we cherish the hope that she will wisely confine her energies to conferring upon these wild countries the blessings of peace and prosperity, and will not bring down upon herself just retribution by disturbing the peace of Europe in futile attempts to increase her possessions in such directions as, the voices of the strongest nations declare, would be dangerous to the peace of the whole world.

The second or German quarter was formerly granted upon building conditions to the settlers of that adventurous nation, whose

presence has been of such immense benefit to the progress of Russia. By degrees they have disposed of much of their property to the saving Armenian bankers and other wealthy natives. There is, again, a purely Armenian quarter, where, since the conquest of this country, they have grown rich and prosperous under a sure and strong government. There is, also, another quarter in which persons of all religions and avocations seem to congregate, Jews, Turks, Persians, and Eastern strangers. Tiflis is already a very large city, and is yearly on the increase. Its situation on the globe is very central, and although the communications either to it or beyond it are not yet developed, yet it is clear that in time they must be so in the rapid march of civilisation, and that then Tiflis will become the centre of communication, not only to the northern part of our possessions in India, but also to the rich country which lies to the north of the Hindoo Koosh and the Himalayan range. These may appear to some wild theories, but I see no reason why the wild tribes of Affghans and Turcomans and Kerghis should not be brought to see the benefits of civilisation and commerce, nor why railroads, the great civilisers of mankind, should not traverse their plains and valleys as they now do those of Europe and of India. This, however, can only be accomplished by European friendships, and not by jealous wars; and so far am I from desiring to foment a Russo-phobia, which I believe common sense is now crying down, that I consider the advances of that nation into Central Asia are likely to benefit mankind, and certainly not least so our own nation.

The value of property in this city appears also to augment in proportion to the city itself. Houses and building lots are worth double, and in some cases fifty-fold, what they were worth a few years since. The stability of the government has created such a sense of security, that I am assured that a square yard of land in the city, which only a few years ago was worth about three

roubles, now frequently sells for one hundred. Many of the superior shops and establishments are German, while a good many are French; but not a single English firm appears to have been sufficiently adventurous to compete in this field. This is the more surprising as so large a quantity of English goods are required, and are imported into this city, which leads me to think that there is a good opening for any of our fellow-countrymen who desire to take advantage of it. M. Hervieu, the correspondent of Messrs. Coutts, appears to be doing a large amount of business, more especially in Parisian modiste articles. They informed me that we were the only Englishmen who had this year travelled in the Caucasus.

Tiflis is not fortified. On its north side, are very extensive arsenals, in which almost all the guns, ammunition, harness, and clothing required by the troops in the Caucasus are manufactured; no coal is used, but charcoal only. Even in the last century Tiflis was noted for its excellence in the manufacture of gunpowder. In the city are some interesting shops, generally kept by Armenians, a cunning set, who invariably ask three times as much as they at last consent to take. They sell many very beautifully worked articles in silver and gold, especially the ornamented Circassian belts, which are in great repute in Russia; also small turquoises which they offer in great profusion and at small prices.

The river Kurr or Kuran, which runs through the city, is a noble and rapid stream. It rises in the mountains on the Turkish frontier, not very distant from the fort of Alexandropol, and is said to produce very fine large salmon, which are caught in the spring season. I was told that they may be freely taken with a live bait, and that the best place for this sport was some miles above the city; but I confess that I did not consider what I heard perfectly reliable.

The public phaëtons in this town cannot be surpassed by any

city in Europe. They are well and tastefully built, and almost universally well horsed; the coachmen are as well dressed as private servants, reflecting great credit upon the authorities who have charge of this department.

I desire to call the especial attention of strangers to the Survey Department of the Etat Major, where maps of this country on all scales can be purchased at very reasonable prices. Their accuracy is surprising, considering the mountainous character of the country, and their execution does great credit to the topographical department of the army. The city was in a great state of excitement, preparing for the intended visit of the Emperor; for although his declared intention was to remain but three days, yet such was the awe and respect that his presence inspired, that nothing which could do him honour was neglected. A camp of 15,000 men was being formed. A palace was being prepared in which to lodge a brother of the Shah of Persia, who was deputed to pay his respects to him. Every one of consequence in the country made a point of being present in the capital on this occasion. The Patriarch of the Armenian church, the head of the Greek, and of the Roman, etc., etc., were all to be there to do him honour and reverence.

We paid our respects to the governor of the district, Orloffsky. We found him full of kindness, with a most winning manner. He gave us every information relative to the routes in the south, and towards the Persian frontier, whither we were now proceeding.

CHAPTER XL.

GEORGIA.

Having, as I said before, been invited to visit General Prince Mirsky, commanding the Russian army in the Trans-Caucasus, at his country residence at Kajori, we hired a very well-appointed phaëton with four horses for the two days, for which, inclusive of driver and every other expense, we were to pay the sum of sixteen roubles, or about 2*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* We left in the afternoon, in company with Major General Zedlinsky, commanding the cavalry brigade. Young Prince Sheervasedjee, aide-de-camp to Baron Nicolaef, the governor of the province, had called upon us in the morning, and expressed to us the satisfaction which it would give the governor, if we would visit him at Betanghi, the country-seat at which he was then residing, situated about seven versts beyond Kajori.

The road from the city of Tiflis was one continued but well-graduated ascent, for the entire distance of about fifteen versts. Kajori stands at an elevation of four thousand four hundred and fifty feet above the level of the Black Sea, and therefore very nearly four thousand feet above the city of Tiflis. This will readily account for the difference of climate, which was very perceptible, although the distance between the two places is not great.

We arrived at Kajori about one o'clock, and were at once pre-

sented to all the members of Prince Mirsky's family. It appeared to us as if we were entering an English family, so much did their manners and customs resemble our own. Prince Mirsky's only son is most agreeable and intelligent. Both he and his sisters speak English in perfection, but otherwise French was, as usual, the medium of conversation. The leading people of Russia are now bringing up their families very much according to English principles, under English tutors and governesses, and laying aside that system of French education which for some years past has been in vogue in that country. They assert that they already see the benefits arising from this course, in the improved general morality of society; and it is to be hoped that this is not a mere compliment. They especially illustrate this by pointing to the light English literature and comparing it with the French. They justly observe that the English works are the more amusing, while at the same time they tend to encourage rather than subvert morality.

General Prince Mirsky appeared a very young man for the high command which he held over an army of more than two hundred thousand soldiers, a position only second to that of the Grand Duke Michael himself. Early in life he was placed by Prince Waronzoff on his staff, and accompanied him upon many of the desperate engagements with Shamyl, and to this, as well as to his talents and agreeable manners and great tact, he justly owes his rapid elevation. The pay of this high position appeared very small and incommensurate with the expenditure which it must entail, being only two thousand pounds per annum; but fortunately there are other means of rewarding successful generals in this wide-spreading country, but such as have not been in vogue with us since the days of Cromwell, viz., by gifts of forfeited estates, of which kind of property there yet exists a considerable amount in the hands of the government. Some years

since Prince Mirsky was presented with an estate near Kutais, which then paid the government about eight hundred roubles per annum, but which has so increased in value that last year it paid to Prince Mirsky about twenty thousand. These are lasting rewards which our general officers can now seldom dream of.

The subject of the abolition of purchase in our army, as well as its reorganisation, had created as much interest on the southern side of the Caucasus, as it had in the north, and I was requested again to explain it in all its bearings, such as have long since been well known to military men, though so little understood by people in general, or until lately by the members of the House of Commons; but the subject will no doubt now receive due consideration, as for some years to come it will make itself felt by increased taxation.

It was very interesting to discuss the state of the Caucasus during our war with Russia. We certainly at that time had no idea of the dangerous position which they were in in this country, and from which they only relieved themselves by sheer determination and bravery. Shamyl was then (1854) in full force in Daghestan, and fully occupying the army in the north, and indeed on all sides of the mountains. In Georgia, and on the confines of Persia and Turkey, the Mohammedan population were ready to rise, assisted by their co-religionists over the borders. The Bashi-Bazooks were already in the field, advancing from the Turkish states, plundering and murdering as they went in their daily forays. To meet all these difficulties the Russians are reported to have had but ten thousand available men in the south; but putting a bold face on the matter, they promptly attacked the Turkish army near Alhalkalaky, and after a most obstinate engagement they defeated them. This was the turning point. The Turks were besieged in Kars. Those Mussulmans who were friendly to the Turkish cause saw their danger, and the Caucasian

provinces were safe; for although Omar Pasha landed an army at Sukum Kali, yet so great was the mismanagement of this expedition, so unfortunate the choice of the landing-place, and so untoward the result, that the Russians soon saw they had nothing to fear from that quarter. How different, however, might have been the fate of that country had we lent our assistance at an earlier stage on this side of the Black Sea, by sending an army into Asia, landing it at Trebizonde, advancing by Erzeroum and Kars, and attacking the Russians near their fort at Alexandropol, in which we could have compelled them to remain, while we brought a hornets' nest about their ears in Tiflis and the whole country from Poti to Batoom! moreover we should have been assisted by tens of thousands of fanatical Mussulmans; for the mountaineers in the most warlike parts, such as Daghestan, are universally Mohammedan. However, on the whole, I believe it to be for the best that this did not take place, for, on our retirement from this country, had we given it to the Turks, a stagnation in all improvement would have followed; and if we had endeavoured to retain it ourselves, a constant state of uneasiness, if not actual strife, would have been produced between us and Russia, from which the worst of consequences to the whole world would have resulted.

We were received most hospitably, and dined in company with General Zedlinsky, who with Prince Mirsky, and also Baron Nicolaef, were present when Prince Waronzoff's army were driven out of the mountains near Wedden, and almost annihilated.

In the afternoon we walked to the hill above Kajori, from which we had a splendid view of the whole range of the Eastern Caucasus, including the magnificent Kasbec, and, passing from thence along the range by Kahiti, on the slopes of those mountains which divide the Trans-Caucasus from Daghestan. There is

a curious old fort at Kajori, the former residence of a bandit chief.

After breakfast, on the following morning, we bade adieu to this charming family, who had received us strangers with so much kindness, and on Friday, the 8th September, we drove on to visit Baron Nicolaef, at Betanghi. We passed over some uncultivated ridges until we reached the edge of the mountains, when we rapidly descended through a beautiful beech forest, very similar to those which may be met with in parts of Kent, but of much greater extent: passing which we drove up to a pleasant country-house in a lovely garden. This estate was purchased some years since by the baron, he having been attracted by the ruined but ancient gardens within it, which he has done wonders to bring to their former fruitful condition. The estate contains about fifteen hundred acres of land, the greatest portion of which is forest. There are some curious old buildings, the remains of Georgian churches, on the property, in one of which there is the sculptured figure of a female, supposed to be that of Kamora, the Queen of Imeritia and Georgia. There is but little doubt that this country was thickly inhabited in former years, traces of which are still found in the fruit trees in the forest.

An iron foundry has been instituted not far distant: the work which they have executed has done them great credit, and is very low in price. A handsome garden-seat, after a European model, being cast at the expense of 1*l.* 7*s.* There are also farms, at which they manufacture cheese, in imitation of Gruyère, which are quite equal to the genuine Swiss ones.

Having expressed to Baron Nicolaef an intention of proceeding south, he gave us every information respecting that country, the road to Erivan, Mount Ararat, and Alexandropol. He both telegraphed and wrote to the authorities of all the places which we were likely to visit, requesting them to show us every attention

and assistance, which proved of the utmost advantage to us: indeed, without this, or the order of the Grand Duke, we afterwards clearly saw, we should have had many difficulties and detentions.

Having spent a most interesting day at Betanghi with Baron Nicolaef, who speaks the English language fluently, we left in sufficient time to reach the bottom of the mountain and enter the city of Tiflis before nightfall. The distance was considerable, but with the light carriage, and our four smart horses we soon reached the top of the hill, from whence rattling through Kajori, by 7 P.M., we were set down at the Hôtel de l'Europe, after an interesting excursion of two days. This hotel was by far the best we had met with since we had quitted Pesth, on the 21st of June, affording all the comforts, civility, and good cooking of a European establishment, and very moderate in its charges.

I was sorry that before leaving Tiflis we could not visit the town and vineyards of Kahiti, whence the wine so famed over the Caucasus is procured. It is both red and white, and somewhat resembles Burgundy. It appears to have a good sound body and flavour, but, to my taste, it is raw and unmade; and, although on more than one occasion I drank some from the store set aside for the Emperor, yet I could not but consider it very inferior to the wines of France and Germany.

The best red Kahiti which we drunk was at Guinib; and the best white wine, in my opinion, at the Convent of Etchmiazin, near Ararat. A good deal of wine is made throughout the Caucasus. It is all consumed in the country, for the Armenians as well as the Russians are very fond indeed of their bottle: in fact, there is a story of a certain Prince Chafchevadsey—of which name, I may mention, there are a great many princes—who was in the habit of emptying five bottles of wine into one flagon, and drinking them at a meal. I have no doubt but that the wine of Kahiti is manufactured into imitations of the wines of France

and Spain, and also that a great deal of brandy is made in the Caucasus and also in the Crimea. Although the sherry and the Madeira sold in Tiflis are very inferior, and the port perfectly undrinkable, yet the imitation of Cognac brandy is by no means unsuccessful, though very inferior to the genuine article for which it is generally sold. It is worthy of notice that the Kahiti wine was known to the Romans.

Kahiti is connected with one of the most interesting anecdotes of the war with Shamyl, who, about the year 1856, accompanied by about one hundred horsemen, crossed secretly over the snowy range which divides it from Lesghia, and hid himself and his men near a Russian camp in the neighbourhood of Kahiti.

At this time the families of the Princes Chafchevadsey and Orbeliani, consisting of their princesses, their daughters, and others, were near the camp. In the dead of the night some of Shamyl's most trusted officers, with about twenty followers, stealthily passing the line of sentries, entered the tents of the ladies, whom they seized, lifted them on to their horses, and succeeded in making their way out of the camp, with these princesses, their daughters, French governess, and all; and this so silently, and so quickly, that the heavy, sleepy Russian guards only woke up to discover what had been done. Pursuit was quite in vain; by morning the whole party had reached the summit of the mountains, and entered Shamyl's territory, and, within a few days, were transported into the very heart of Lesghia, to Dargi Vedemmo, and placed under the protection of some of the principal officers of Shamyl's court, whose attentions to some of these ladies are said to have been of so gallant a nature that, on their return to the lower country, maternal cares were imposed upon them;—how far this may be true, I cannot say. Long negotiations were set on foot for their release, which was only eventually accomplished by the payment of 40,000

roubles, and the permission to return to Circassia granted to a younger son of Shamyl, who was being educated at St. Petersburg, but who not long after died in the mountains, possibly from his inability to encounter the hardships of a life to which he had long been unaccustomed. I understood that the husband of Princess Chafchevadsey was a son of the last King of Georgia,—George XIII.,—who, feeling how tottering his throne was, and how incapable of being sustained in its integrity, bequeathed the sovereignty of his country to the Emperor Paul of Russia.

Kahiti, from its lying somewhat exposed to the sudden incursions of the wary mountaineers, was always a source of anxiety to the Russians, and numerous expeditions were undertaken from thence, in one of which fell the husband of Madame La Baronne Julie Wrewsky, whose acquaintance I made in the Crimea, as already related. The internal dissensions of the Georgian nobles caused the downfall of the country. This was, perhaps, the best thing that could happen for the ultimate benefit of the inhabitants, a weak and poor government being replaced by a strong, though, perhaps, a somewhat despotic one. The nobles themselves, although somewhat of their own consequence has been absorbed, are now in a far better position than formerly; and although they have lost their native sovereign, whose regal descent, it was said, was proved by each child being born with the royal eagle marked on its shoulder, yet stability in the government of the people and a general improvement in their country may compensate them for any loss of dignity they may have undergone in the absorption of their nation into that of their more powerful neighbour.

Many of the Georgian women are extremely handsome. Before marriage every endeavour is made to keep their waists as thin as possible. This is done by a girdle, which, as they increase in stature, is occasionally removed, when quite insupport-

able, but which is immediately replaced, after being only very slightly enlarged. By which means, the bosom being largely developed, a corresponding increase of admiration in this country is produced. It is said that this belt was formerly never removed until the nuptial day, and then only by the dagger of the bridegroom. Many such ancient customs, which have become obsolete in the neighbourhood of the capital, are still extant in the mountains and the distant country. It was chiefly from Georgia that the Turks used to procure the inmates of their harems; and the Persians and Mussulmans from the North of India are also said to have made constant requisitions upon the trans-Caucasus for this object, paying fabulous prices, even up to 20,000 piastres, for one of these beautiful women. Consequently the Georgian stock is most largely disseminated throughout all these Mahometan countries. This source of reinvigoration to the Mussulman race may now be considered as closed, which leads many to predict that the degeneracy of races in Persia, Turkey, and Egypt will increase with rapid strides. To this cause may be traced much of the hatred of the Mussulmans towards the Russians, whose victorious advances have put an end to the voluptuous indulgences which, for so many centuries, the Mahommedans have enjoyed.

CHAPTER XLI.

TIFLIS TO ERIVAN.

In the afternoon of Saturday, the 9th September, we again mounted into our old friend, the tarantasse. We purchased a supply of bread, etc., and also some wine, in which we were thoroughly cheated, and were obliged to throw it away as soon as our basket was opened. Our destination was now Erivan, for which we had received every document and letter which could be of service to us. Mr. Woolwich, the Consul-General of Turkey, had also written letters to Osman Pasha at Kars, so that if we should be able to visit that place we might meet with an agreeable reception; but next to the small dispatch in pencil written by order of the Grand Duke, we found that a very large document, with an immense red wax seal and signed by Baron Nicolaef, was all powerful, and acted as a talisman to all our wishes. We made our way through the city by the side of the river Kuron to the outskirts of Tiflis. Here we met a large number of carts and Persian waggons loaded with fruit and merchandise, such as cotton, silk, carpets, and tobacco. This Persian trade is fostered by the Russian Government with much care and assiduity, for I was informed that goods are allowed to pass in from Persia duty free, as an inducement to bring them by this route rather than by that of Trebizonde or through Turkey. We observed that every one

of these convoys, not excepting even the waggons containing only water-melons, had a guard of mounted Cossacks armed with rifle, pistol, sword, etc., etc. We had been furnished with an order for guards, and had been warned that it was not safe to travel without them; and had been recommended not to travel at all after dark, especially near the frontier of Persia. We therefore thought it better to pass the night at the second stage, at Talrugda. Subsequently, however, we determined to take our chance of robbers rather than stop for the night at inconvenient places, and as we met with no adventures from robbers, we had no cause to regret our determination. However, on the following morning we requested the attendance of two Cossacks, which was at once granted, as a matter of course, the necessity of which became apparent when we saw every traveller we met thus escorted. To the mail cart, indeed, was attached a guard of three heavily armed men, in addition to the courier, who was bristling with pistols, and we found that every one of these soldiers had their rifles carefully loaded, ready at a moment's call, for we were told that highway robberies in this direction were by no means unfrequent.

The native drivers we found far more sharp-witted and more quick at understanding us than the Russians. Only on one occasion had we much difficulty, which was occasioned by the absence of the post-office official and the inability of the man left in charge to read the orders of Baron Nicolaef. In all countries alike, I have found that the lower a man's position in society the more tyrannical he becomes when placed in power. Shortly before we turned due south and quitted the Kuron, that river was joined by the Aleylka, over which we passed by a narrow stone bridge of ancient construction. Many of the villages hereabouts consist of houses constructed entirely under ground, a hole being left in the earth to enter by. The summer heat

renders this plan very convenient. A fine new road was in course of construction to Erivan, which will prove of great advantage, for, doubtless, when the railway from Poti is completed, trade will be greatly increased in this direction also.

The country was here sterile, but towards Orguntalon the land became of better quality, and cultivation increased, corn and other cereals being produced on an extensive scale. Here first we came across a long string of camels—ships of the desert—they were wending their weary way in the direction of the East, and, seen from a distance, their regularity of pace and correct formation made us mistake them for a troop of cavalry. We now entered some beautifully wooded mountain scenery, the road winding by the side of a swift-running stream. Here we saw a beautiful fountain, built of white marble with an inscription upon it, evidently of ancient date, and in this shady glen the cool running water was most agreeable, after the hot drive we had had over the open plain.

At nightfall we reached the Lake Gotcha, a very considerable piece of water, being 40 versts long and averaging 18 broad. An Armenian convent stands on the island, which is annually visited by the Patriarch from Etchmiazin, and is renowned for its hospitalities to strangers. This lake is said to produce large quantities of fine trout, very much resembling salmon. We purchased two, about five pounds weight each; these had been salted and dried in the sun, and they resembled in all respects, inclusive of colour, the very best kippered salmon of Scotland, being cured exactly in the same way. This fish cost us about 4*d.* per pound, which here was considered excessively dear. I have no doubt excellent trout-fishing could be had in this lake, but no salmon, as I do not think there is any communication between Lake Gotcha and the sea. I very much regretted that we could not remain for some days at Elianofskia, a flourishing Russian settlement on

its banks, where the station-house appeared better than usual, and the post-master and others were very civil.

The lake of Gotcha is said to be four thousand feet above the Black Sea. Some considerable Russian settlements have been made on its banks, amongst which I may mention that of Tchoubouklou, as being apparently very flourishing. Leaving Elianofskia, the road was made entirely of pieces of lava, which for miles was seen cropping up in all directions; as also an endless quantity of flint, which was so much fused as to resemble masses of glass when melted in the furnace—evident signs of the volcanic character of the region. Husbandry hereabouts was carried on in the rudest manner. The wheels of the carts were composed of one solid block of wood. Winnowing the corn was entirely done by throwing it in the air with a wooden spade, and in lieu of a threshing-machine they used the primitive sledge, the bottom of which was set with rows of sharp-pointed flints, suggesting the idea that many of the flint arrow-heads which are found in Europe and America, and are supposed to have been manufactured for warlike purposes, may, on the contrary, have been no other than the flint teeth with which their threshing-sledges were shod.

We had been travelling all night, and at six A.M. we caught sight of Mount Ararat, then about sixty-five miles distant. The morning was bright and clear, and this noble mountain, entirely disconnected with any range, rose out of the plain in all its majesty. Not a single cloud rested on its snow-covered head, upon which the morning sun was reflected with brilliant whiteness. Although we were subsequently for nearly a week within sight of this splendid mountain, yet on no other occasion did we see its summit entirely free from clouds. Mount Ararat is about 17,122 feet high, and although from the fact of no other mountains being near, one might imagine it would impress the mind

with a greater idea of its immense height, yet such is not the fact, and although it is 1,362 feet higher than Mount Blanc, which is 15,760, yet by reason of its peculiar form it does not appear to be anything like so lofty.

The Cossacks that now attended us appeared to be a sort of light Persian horsemen, very skilful in their arms and in their horsemanship, in which respect they somewhat resembled, but by no means equalled, the Lesghians. They appeared to pride themselves upon their activity with the sword; rushing madly to the front and flanks, they flourished this weapon in circles around them, making feint to attack an enemy, whereas the Lesghians depend more upon their rifle, and at close quarters on their trusty dagger. These Tartars were very quick at understanding our wishes, yet we found the Turkish and even Hindostani language of much service, the latter containing many Persian words.

CHAPTER XLII.

ERIVAN.

On Monday, the 11th September, after passing over fifteen versts of the roughest new-made road, pounding over boulders as big as hat-boxes, our tarantass rattled into the ancient Persian city of Erivan, now in the hands of the Czar of all the Russias. An officer, of whom we inquired where we could obtain a lodging, turned out to be the chief officer of police, and one to whom especial directions to show us every attention had been given by the governor, who had gone to Tiflis. He at once mounted a beautiful white Arab charger, with grand and showy action, and taking us under his charge, directed the driver to follow him. We passed through many streets, halting at length in a fine square, at a large house, at the door of which were two sentries; here we were invited to alight. The officer of police could not speak one word of French, and we were at a loss to know if so much comfort as we saw around us was intended for our use; but an Armenian gentleman very soon came in, who explained that the governor of the city was absent, but previous to his departure he had left word that we should be lodged in his own apartments in the government house, and that meals should be supplied to us, for which no recompense should be received during the time it might please us to remain in Erivan. Such kindness as this could not be surpassed, but will show what an English officer may

expect when travelling in this country. We were immediately served with hot tea, after which an immense tray of the most inviting fruits was presented to us, consisting of magnificent grapes, peaches, pomegranates, apples, and melons. But the gentleman who interpreted for us warned us to be careful in regard to eating much of the fruit, though from previous experience such a caution was scarcely needed. After we were somewhat refreshed, two well-appointed phaëtons were brought to the door, and, accompanied by the acting governor and Major Bellofsky (the latter of whom spoke French perfectly), we drove to the citadel. It had undergone very little or no reparation since it had been taken from the Persians in 1828; the walls, though somewhat dilapidated and faced with mud, are yet better than they appear.

The old palace is curious and handsome. The council-chamber of Zanga Shah is very highly ornamented, in the Persian style; it consists of a room raised five feet above the level of the court-yard, but with the whole side, which overlooks the court, constructed to be so completely removable, that the room seems to open into the court itself. An immense heavy drop curtain is so fixed as to be lowered or raised at pleasure by cords, two pillars supporting the roof on that side. The interior of the room is highly painted and gilt; blue and yellow are the predominant colours; impossible flowers, with symmetrical leaves, surround looking-glasses, which are fixed into the wall; little squares of blue and yellow glass are placed in the window-frames. Above, on the walls, the portraits of kings and commanders, with elegant black hair and mustachios, wear either a conventional frown or a bland meaningless smile, while at each end are battle-pieces, representing a fight between Persians and Turks, in which not one Persian is even wounded, while the Turks are represented in every stage of dismemberment. An immense picture of the presiding Shah is

painted right in the sky, overlooking the whole, his body as big as a tower of the fortifications. An alabaster fountain, placed in the centre of the room, refreshed the ears of the Shah, and of the grand officers by whom he was surrounded, with the murmur in which Orientals delight; and in the court below, a large stone tank, filled to the brim with sparkling water, reflected the bright paintings, the pillars covered with looking-glass, the portraits of the Shah, the pictures of his victories and his Persian commanders, presenting a curious and interesting repetition of the scene.

Passing out by an old door, we entered, through a private entrance, into the court of the harem, or women's apartments. This was a long oblong yard, through the centre of which a narrow stream of water flowed, between rows of trees, which gave a pleasant shade. This court was now much changed; the little painted plaster imitation bricks, which had covered the walls, had peeled off, and showed the inner mud and cow-dung mortar; the rain had taken much of the paint off the windows and doors. The court looked draggled and dirty. Soldiers were lodged in the rooms, where a hundred wives of a Shah had passed their monotonous and unvaried lives. The ground was strewn with bright green pottery, once the property of these women, and possibly, if the ground were excavated, ornaments and jewels would be discovered, which had formerly graced the person of some favoured wife.

An old mosque adjoins the palace; it must have been handsome once, for a large portion of the glazed tiles which covered it still remain, and are beautifully illustrated by verses of the Koran, in the Arabic character.

Remounting our carriages, we crossed over the river, by a bridge which had originally been built by the Persians, and which had been very well repaired by the Russians. Entering a

THE MOSQUE AND BATHS AT ERIVAN, WITH MOUNT ARARAT IN THE BACKGROUND. P. 278.

garden, which was laid out in straight avenues, and planted with vines, but now much neglected, we visited a pretty summer residence, formerly resorted to by the Shah. This also was illuminated in bright and fanciful designs and colours, and contained numberless portraits of illustrious statesmen, as well as of the inmates of the former harems. We here met an Armenian gentleman, who, in the French language, described to us a wonderful church, about forty versts distant, which is said to be of two or more stories, or rather churches, in height. This church is called Keriwart, and although of considerable size, yet the whole is said to be cut out of one solid block of black stone, exceedingly hard to work—I presume, basalt. It was here that the veritable lance-head, which was said to have pierced our Saviour, was formerly kept, till it was removed to the Convent of Etchmiazin, where it is now preserved. During the conversation with the Armenian gentleman, some parties danced and played; their instruments were a drum and a discordant clarinet, somewhat resembling a bagpipe; the absence of any air being made up by the vigour of the performers. An admiring ring of spectators clapped their hands to the music, while two or three men danced a regular Irish jig. It was no mere attempt at shuffling, but regular hard dancing; the steps were most elaborate, and very rapid, and an occasional "hoick" and flourish of the fingers completed the resemblance.

We next drove into the city. Passing under the covered ways of a truly Oriental bazaar, we approached the grand mosque. This is built and decorated much in the same way as that in the citadel, but with the advantage of being in a very fair state of repair, both as to the building and its ornaments. It possesses a minaret of surpassing beauty in shape and colour, which is also richly ornamented with enamelled porcelain tiles from top to bottom. In no part of the world that I have visited, not even in

China itself, have I ever seen one of this peculiar design, or one more beautiful; for although the porcelain pagoda once existing at Nankin, but destroyed, since I saw it, by the rebels, was much higher and larger, yet its form, in my opinion, was not nearly so graceful. Weeds had already made some slight havoc on the roof of the dome of the mosque; but when I pointed this out to the head Imaun, he appeared rather ashamed, and said that they should be instantly removed. I may mention that this sacred building contains in its precincts a Mussulman convent, the cells of the devotees surrounding a large court-yard in front of the mosque.

We now returned to our comfortable quarters, and partook of a handsome dinner and excellent wine, provided for us by the forethought of the absent governor; and, thoroughly tired with our thirty-six hours' rattle, in addition to the sights we had seen, we slept soundly on our comfortable beds.

Attended on the following morning by Major Bellofsky, we made an interesting inspection of the great caravanserai and of the bazaars, which, differing from those of Constantinople, are here purely Oriental in their character. We purchased some small but handsome prayer-rugs at about ten shillings each, and some carved brass bowls at equally moderate prices. A very large portion of the bazaar was now untenanted, owing, it was said, to the absence during the summer of the proprietors of these shops to their country gardens; but I imagine that Erivan must have dwindled since the Russian occupation, and that it is now no longer one of the most considerable of Persian cities. A large number of its inhabitants, especially the Mahomedans, have gone to settle where their own creed is professed, either in Persia or in Turkey. In the bazaar the flaps of bread, commonly used by all the inhabitants, were being baked. They are five feet long by two broad, and of a doughy texture. They are

baked in a hot oven, the bottom of which is lined about six inches deep with small pebbles, which not only retain the heat and prevent the bread from being burnt, but also give to it a singular freckled appearance. This bread costs about an halfpenny per pound; and as fruit is remarkably cheap, and the poor generally live upon these two articles, the expense of the maintenance of a family of six or eight persons may be rated at not more than as many pence per diem. A large quantity of cotton is grown near Erivan. This all goes to Moscow, returning from thence in the shape of Russian manufactured cloth. Very few articles of English manufacture were to be seen in the bazaars.

Some of the best Persian carpets manufactured in this country are said to be produced in the private factory of a certain Prince Risali Kouli, a Persian. This gentleman, who belongs to the family of the Shah of Persia, is said to have, many years since, rebelled against his relative, the reigning sovereign. Being unsuccessful, he sought the protection of Russia, which she thought it both convenient and politic to grant, accompanying it with the gift of a house near the border of Persia, with an income in money and certain trade advantages equal to one hundred thousand roubles a year. The Prince, exercising Mahomedan rights and customs, is the happy possessor of a harem containing three hundred wives; but as idleness is well known to be a sin, and well-managed industry very profitable, the Prince, in return for the care and attention he bestows upon his immense female household, is rewarded by the result of their amusement in the shape of many hundreds of beautiful Persian rugs yearly, which, being sold in the markets of northern Russia, increase his revenues to an extent by no means inconsiderable. He thus combines pleasure and profit, and entirely within the laws and ordinances of his religion.

Erivan, as a city, is not considered very healthy; the air is

said to be occasionally charged with fever, which, perhaps, may be attributed to the large space of land to the south, rendered humid by irrigation; this, however, is a necessity, if the inhabitants of this city are to be fed. As a means of protection against fever, many of the inhabitants dye the top of the head, as well as their beards and their feet, of a red colour, which, whether efficacious or not, certainly gives them a very comical appearance.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE CONVENT.

On Tuesday, the 12th September, after inspecting certain repairs of the wheels of our carriage, for which, as the vehicle was the property of the Government, we were not permitted to make any payment, and having laid in a few stores for our journey, and among them what was called Cognac brandy, but which turned out to be very bad rum, we bade adieu to the authorities of the city, many of whom attended us on our departure. We were here presented to a Persian gentleman, the chief of his nation in the city; he was a man of most commanding figure, of enormous height and size. Major Bellofsky attended us on horseback, nor would he be persuaded to return until he had accompanied us fully two miles outside the city of Erivan.

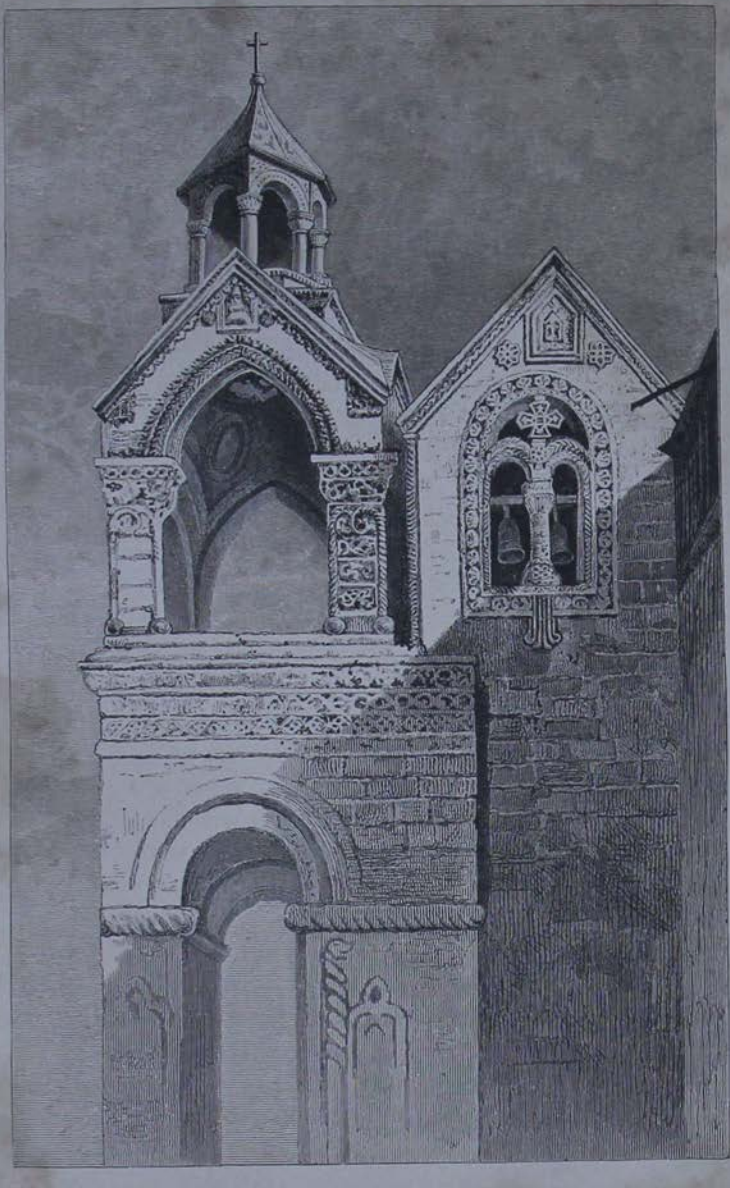
We first passed over the bridge by a cruelly rough road, and threaded the gardens between very high walls, built to protect the inmates of the harems from the eyes of gay deceivers. At the extremity of the environs, and just as we reached the open country, a guard of honour of about twenty Cossacks was drawn up to receive us. These men were dressed in long white tunics, and well armed; many of them, in place of the pistol, carried a small blunderbuss, in size that of a child's toy, but when loaded heavily with slugs very effective at short distances. These men were well mounted; their horses, which were generally white, presented a

curious appearance, in consequence of most of them being caparisoned with scarlet baskliks round their necks.

We here changed guards, our city escort returning, the rural cavalry now surrounding us. No sooner had we got into the country than the road improved, and we were then driven at a fast gallop. The Cossacks now dashed in circles around us, firing their blunderbusses in attack and defence, and with drawn swords entered into a somewhat dangerous play. I was surprised to see the dash with which their horses went at full gallop over the sharp, rocky ground on either side of the road, occasionally being suddenly pulled upon their haunches with the sharp Turkish bit. Every three or four miles we passed a picket house, on the roof of which we always saw an armed Cossack scanning the plain between us and Mount Ararat.

In about two hours we reached the Armenian Convent of Etchmiazin, where it was arranged we were to pass the night. Here we were received by the police-master, post-master, and other authorities of this convent town, and conducted into the inner courts, in the centre of the largest of which stood the ancient church. We were quite enraptured with its beauty. Round the quadrangle were the buildings inhabited by the primate, the archbishop, the monks, also the kitchen, the libraries, &c, &c.

The convent of Etchmiazin is the principal, and perhaps the oldest Armenian convent in Europe or Asia, the Armenians in all parts of the world acknowledging the patriarch who resides there as the head of their church. It is stated to have been founded one thousand five hundred years ago. It has undergone from time to time great vicissitudes, periods of great splendour and prosperity, and of great depression and poverty. It has been repaired, retaining, until quite recently, its ancient style. But at the last considerable repair, only two years since, by a sad fatuity



PORCH OF CHURCH, ETCHMIAZIN, A.D. 300, NEAR MOUNT ARARAT. P. 285.

they adopted the Russian modern style, thus the richly carved tower and belfry remain in red stone, after the beautiful ancient model, while the remainder is of a totally different character, greatly to the detriment of the general effect. The interior of the church is richly painted and gilt in old designs. The altar is very gorgeous; on it are twelve very well executed pictures of the apostles in oriental alabaster, which have an exceedingly good effect. There are, also, two very handsome pulpits, one of Persian manufacture, of very intricate work, and supposed to have been presented by the Shah; the other is known to have been the gift of the Pope of Rome—Gregory XII.

We were shown an enormous silver urn, very handsome in pattern, and holding from ten to twelve gallons of consecrated oil. The consecration of this oil is performed with very great ceremony, and the quantity is calculated to last for about seven years. As an especial mark of consideration we were allowed to see the holiest relics of the convent. The exhibition of these was accompanied by very curious and holy ceremonies, without which it was not permitted that they should be taken out of the sanctuary in which they were deposited. Many monks, dressed in their sacred robes, chanted whilst the superior proceeded into an inner chamber behind the altar, incense burning the while. One by one the sacred relics were produced from the stone-vaulted chamber, brought with great care from the altar, and placed upon a large table covered with a richly embroidered cloth. The first relic was said to be the actual head of the spear that pierced our Saviour's side; it is of brass, and certainly appeared to me of modern workmanship. The second was a piece of Noah's ark, which was delivered by an angel to the patriarch Jacobus, *i.e.*, St. James of Nisibis. It is said that Jacobus resided on this spot, which is but a few miles distant from the base of Mount Ararat;

that his constant occupation was that of climbing the mountain, with a view of obtaining a portion of the ark. He, however, was never allowed to reach the summit, being miraculously brought back by night as far as he had gone by day, until an angel, at length taking compassion upon him, made him a present of the portion of the timber of the ark which was shown to us in the convent.

They have here a tradition that no one has ever yet reached the summit of Mount Ararat. Professor Parrot, Behrens, Seamour, Rhodzko, Khamkoff, and others are said to have ascended it, but I very much doubt if any one of them has reached the summit; at least they positively assert at Etchmiazin that no one has ever done so. Josephus alludes to the belief that portions of Noah's ark still existed, and I believe that it is by no means an uncommon belief that its wreck exists still on the summit of the mountain. The third relic shown to us was a piece of the true cross, upon which our Saviour was crucified, and which is naturally held in the highest estimation. Then followed a few other holy articles, such as the hands of saints in silver cases, etc., etc.; but the first three were by far the most highly esteemed by the brotherhood.

Passing out of the church, we carefully examined the beautiful belfry. It is built of red sandstone in a highly ornamented style, something resembling the Byzantine. The arches, however, were carved very similarly to those in some of our old Norman churches. Near to this tower are the tombs of two archbishops, well executed in Oriental marble. Here, also, is a handsome tombstone of white Italian marble, placed by the Honourable East India Company to the memory of Sir John Macdonald, envoy from India to Persia, who died in this neighbourhood from the effects of the climate and over-fatigue. We were now shown to a suite of rooms most comfortably furnished, and were well

supplied with all we could desire, excellent beds and very generous and hospitable entertainment, for which, when we left the convent, no remuneration whatever would be accepted, nor were we allowed to give any recompense whatever excepting a small gratuity to the poor.

In the evening we were invited to partake of the hospitality of his eminence the archbishop. He entertained us in his rooms, and the wine of the country, which was liberally handed to us, was far better than any I had tasted on the south side of the Caucasus. There was excellent fruit, particularly muscatel grapes from a solitary tree of this kind, which grew in the convent gardens.

The Archbishop Kukir Sakiniants was a fine old man, with handsome features and a mild address; he had been many years archimandrite of Karasu Bazaar, in the Crimea, but when his wife was dead, his daughters married, and his sons in various professions, he entered upon these sacred duties, and retired to this somewhat isolated position. We had no opportunity of being presented to the Patriarch himself, as he had proceeded to Tiflis to pay his respects to the Emperor.

After supper we returned to our rooms, and it is my pleasing duty to record that one of the poor servants of the convent brought to us a Russian bank-note of some value, saying he had found it lying amongst our small traps. Nothing could induce him to receive a present of money, which we pressed upon him in return; the only way, therefore, in which we could reward this act of honesty was by forcing upon him the acceptance of a silk scarf, which we insisted upon his taking.

On the following morning we were taken to the library, which was exceedingly rich in old manuscripts; much care and pains have been bestowed upon sorting them, and of the greater portion a list has been printed, describing two thousand five hundred

manuscript volumes. Many of these are of immense size and great bulk, and all are beautifully written on the finest parchment, almost universally in the Armenian language, evidencing an incredible amount of industry and patience. This library is said in former times to have contained fifteen thousand volumes, but in the days in which the convent was continually subject to a tax, first from the Persian, then from the Turk, thousands of these precious volumes were lost. Not many years since they were freely given away to strangers, and those who were sufficiently acquainted with Oriental literature to know their value carried to Europe many of these precious documents, where they occasionally parted with them at very high prices. The monks presented us with a copy of their catalogue of the manuscripts already examined and tabulated, which copy has been deposited in the Oriental library at Cambridge. They have, under great difficulties, established a printing-press, from which are now produced works which do them great credit. The task, however, was Herculean, for no sooner had they taught some of the natives to work this press than they demanded enormous wages, and rather than work for a reasonable sum they preferred eating water melons and flap bread in the bazaar at a daily expenditure of one penny. To send to Moscow or St. Petersburg for instructed printers was beyond their means. Formerly the revenues of this convent were derived from twenty-five villages, of which they were possessors; but on the conquest of this country by the Russians they were dispossessed of all of them, with the exception, I believe, of two. It may seem singular, therefore, when I say that the conquest has been very much for their benefit. The fact is that the Persian Shah was in the habit of treating the superior of this convent as a sort of banker, into whose hands he never paid any money, but, nevertheless, continually drew money out; thus the chief of the

convent and the monks had the honour of possessing, and the labour of attending to, these twenty-five villages; but the greater part of the benefit arising therefrom was absorbed by their rulers. Since the conquest of this country by Russia their affairs have assumed more regularity. The Czar has already given them five villages, and their revenues have gradually risen to eighty thousand roubles a year, and would far exceed that sum were it not that their charity causes them to lend a ready ear to the application of their tenants for a remission of their rents. The expenses of the convent are very considerable. In addition to the patriarch and archbishop they have about forty resident monks to provide for, and they also daily dine all religious travellers who visit them, frequently numbering one hundred and fifty. They also maintain in the convent a school of twenty-five boys, who are instructed by the monks. They state that their consumption is nearly one small bullock and two sheep daily in the kitchen, besides large quantities of bread and vegetables, and seventy-five thousand poods of wood per month, which, on account of all the forest in the neighbourhood having been destroyed, is now an article of great expense. When the Armenian kingdom was broken up by the invasion of the Tartars this convent suffered much, and, indeed, was continually plundered and heavily taxed. Their position, at the base of Mount Ararat, was a sort of neutral battle-ground between the Persians and the Turks, and whichever side was victorious, the convent of Etchmiazin suffered. It is said to have been enormously wealthy: its rich chalices and other objects of gold and silver, with the exception of some few objects which they hid, have been from time to time all plundered. In 1828, when this country was ceded to Russia, the happy days of this Christian brotherhood were again in the ascendant. Now the convent shows evident though gradual signs of regaining something of its ancient prosperity.

Too much cannot be said in praise of the wonderful strength of faith which the Armenians possess, for, although their country was, during many years, overrun by the Mussulman, Turk, and Persian, and every inducement held out to them to change their faith, yet nothing could cause them to give up the cross and assume the crescent. A very intelligent young priest named Stephane, said to me with fervour, "Our faith, our religion, is all to us! Kill me, but you cannot rob me of my faith."

The patriarch is elected, as far as I could understand, by the equal suffrages of the clergy and the laity. They choose thirty monks to form a synod, from which, when a patriarch dies, three names are selected, which are placed before the Emperor, out of whom he makes the final selection. The position of the patriarch and of the Armenian bishop of a diocese must be very lucrative, although it is not known exactly from what sources their wealth is derived. Probably a large portion of it is the gift either in money or jewels of their congregations, over whom the Armenian clergy and religion have a very powerful influence. Some time since, when the daughter of the bishop of Alhaltsikh was married, it is said that her father gave her immense riches in dowry, amongst which were bags of oriental pearls.

The union of the Armenian and Catholic churches was once very earnestly contemplated. The Pope hoped to include in his embraces at the same time the Greek as well as the Armenian church; but the recent difficulties of the church of Rome have certainly tended to a contrary result, as now neither the Greek nor Armenian church would be inclined to place themselves under the head of a church, which has met with such misfortunes, culminating in its entire loss of temporal power and authority.

In the whole course of our tour, there was, perhaps, nothing which we saw more full of interest than the Armenian convent of Etchmiazin, situated as it is near the base of Mount

Ararat, at or near whose summit the three countries, Russia, Turkey, and Persia meet. It presents an object worthy of the attention of all travellers, and its library cannot be even casually visited without striking the attention of the most unlearned of its visitors. We made our arrangements to leave the convent by a frontier by-road leading to the town and fort of Alexandropol, having received permission to divert the post-horses requisite for this journey, for two days, from their proper posting-roads, a favour for which we felt deeply indebted to the governor.

The small town of Etchmiazin contains about eight thousand inhabitants; it belongs entirely to the convent, is generally prosperous, and would be more so but for the idleness of its inhabitants. The country round this district is decidedly unhealthy; it abounds with fever, caused either by the marshes between it and the city of Erivan, or by the impurity of the water. A material alteration for the worse in this respect must have taken place since the first institution of the convent, for the oldest histories speak of it as being a resort of those who studied peace, health, and happiness in this quiet retreat, from the turbulent and warlike atmosphere which surrounded them. Not far from Etchmiazin are very large rocks of salt. The trade in this article is immense; it is of the very best quality, and produces to the government some million of roubles annually.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE TURKISH FRONTIER.

We started from the convent at a rattling gallop, the horses, in fact, all running away. This pace we continued over an easy road, for almost the whole of this evening's drive. The police naib with ten Cossacks accompanied us, partly for honour, partly for protection. We were proceeding to the very verge of the frontiers of Persia in a very wild country, which we were informed was not always free from the incursions of lawless men of a wild Kurdish tribe. At eight we arrived at the fort of Sardarabat, an old and very considerable mud fortress. It is situated within five or six miles of the Turkish frontier, from which this district is divided by a small river called the Arpachi. We were received at the gate of the town by the venerable priest, robed in a handsome dress of rich embroidered silk, carrying on a cushion a beautifully illuminated edition of the Evangelists. Accompanying him was the head man of the town, with the hoary locks of years, who presented to us a tray, on which were laid some bread and a small saucer of salt. We accepted freely the hospitalities of the town, then for the first time emblematically rendered in bread and salt. This custom exists among the Arabs, but I had never seen it practised elsewhere. Crowds of people surrounded our carriage, having in their hands small plates of grease, each containing a lighted wick, as it was now dark. We threaded our way to the

house we were to occupy, lighted by the numerous tapers of these kind attendants. Hard boards, but well-meant hospitality, were accorded to us, and a supper of roast fowl, tea, and wine, probably the best they could produce, with an invitation to take as much vodskey, or native brandy, as we might desire, was placed freely at our disposal, without any payment except what we might choose to bestow upon the attendants.

My knowledge of the Turkish language, imperfect as it was, here proved of great service to us, as it enabled me to make every arrangement for the next morning. I diligently questioned the inhabitants as to the sporting generally, and the large game in particular. I was told that to the west of Ararat was to be found the ibex, and still nearer to us very large stags; but I do not place entire reliance upon this information, for I well know that frequently in the kindness of their heart they state as a fact, that which they know you are desirous of hearing.

It was no great punishment to rise at four A.M., and thus to escape the tormentors that infest most of the couches and sofas in this country. During the process of harnessing our five horses, the whole started off with the carriage, knocking down and running over both driver and postilion, and madly galloping through the town. They were lost in the distance. We had fixed our baggage so securely that it could not budge, but the small articles, such as maps, coats, flasks, umbrellas, sticks, etc., gave us tracks by which we could follow up the vanishing vehicle, which at length we discovered. Two horses were on the ground, the carriage was stuck in an impassable narrow gateway. The drivers having now come to life, and having got the carriage in an open plain, proceeded to race it round in gradually diminishing circles to sober the horses, and we were enabled to jump in, when they again started off at a furious gallop from the town of Sardarabat,

while five or six Cossacks circling their horses went through, as usual, a mimic fight around us. Some of these men carried their long guns in a singular way, but apparently without inconvenience. They were laid on their saddles under their right legs, thus, in fact, they sat upon them, a position which one would imagine would be painful to them, but which they preserved during the whole day; and I presume it was their usual custom. One of these horsemen carried a lance, the shaft of which was a beautiful male bamboo, evidently Indian. This was the only lance I had seen amongst all the native soldiers who had accompanied us in the Caucasus. For although the Cossacks of the plains are armed with a lance, those of the mountain never carry that weapon.

The country through which we passed was very rocky, wild, and quite uncultivated. To use a somewhat Irish expression, the only sign of life was the tombs of the scanty inhabitants, who, although so poor while living, are when dead honoured with very handsome monuments, carved in red sandstone.

About two P.M. we reached the village of Mastera, some forty versts from Sardarabat. This village belongs to the Armenian convent of Etchmiazin. Here the ceremony of presenting bread and salt was again performed. The native villages on this border frontier, after the vicissitudes they underwent before the occupation of this country, were left in a state, in many instances, of sad desolation; they now show signs of regaining prosperity. The old Armenian churches, which in many instances had fallen into ruins, are being re-roofed, and wherever a supply of water can be obtained the ground is tilled. At Mastera a large supply of corn was being housed for the wants of the winter, and to meet their rents. This grain was being poured into a siloe, or circular hole in the earth, beneath which is a cellar lined with hard cement, impervious not only to water, but even to damp

This being filled in with corn, is then covered with straw, stones, and earth, and in this manner, when the scourge of war passes over the land, these siloes are so concealed that they frequently escape the eager eyes of the cunning and rapacious Bashi Bazouk. The houses in the villages are most singularly constructed, no window or opening is to be perceived on the outside of them. After entering by a low door, and threading your way through darkened passages, you enter a large courtyard in the centre of the building; this, with the exception of a small space in the middle, is on all sides roofed over. One portion is allotted to the horses, which are attended to with quite as much care as the men. On another side is a handsome divan, with richly carved stone-built fireplace, and on the other sides are small well-swept divisions, in which strangers repose themselves after the fatigues of the journey; but every room in the building is lighted from above.

After changing our tired horses for four fresh ones, which had been sent by the kind attention of the governor from Alexandropol, with also a fresh escort of mounted men, we speedily passed over an undulating country, and at nine P.M. we found ourselves in a tolerably comfortable inn in the town of Alexandropol, at a short distance from the far-famed modern fort. The hotel was kept by an old German and his wife, who appeared to be thriving: their eldest son, in consequence of being a good linguist, had lately received a place of some emolument in the new railroad, which was being constructed from Poti to the metropolis, Tiflis. Spreading our carpets, as usual, on our wooden stretchers, we soon buried all these scenes in temporary oblivion.

On the following morning I was waited upon by Colonel Chafsokoff, who was acting as civil governor. He graciously inquired in what way he could serve me, and when I told him that I was anxious, after having seen the town, to proceed

towards Anhaltic, he immediately gave every direction that horses should be provided for our use. He was accompanied by the government schoolmaster, who acted as interpreter, having by his own pains and industry taught himself the French language. This gentleman took great trouble in giving us information upon various subjects connected with this country; and as an instance of its cheapness he stated that a household could be decently maintained with all its requisites on a rouble, or two and eightpence per day. In the afternoon the acting-governor again called in his carriage, and drove us round the town. The new Armenian church is handsome. It is built of three different-coloured sandstones, red, white, and black, and the union of these three gives a singular, though not unpleasing effect.

The powerful fortress of Alexandropol is the largest, if not the only one of consideration, in the Caucasus. It is built on an eminence commanding an extensive plain, and dominating the river Arpachi, which divides the Russian from the Turkish territory. It is said to have cost many millions of roubles. At its southern extremity is a strong round tower, built of stone, in which are mounted about sixteen guns. On its northern extremity is a new work disconnected with the fort itself, but apparently of much greater strength, with a wide ditch, citadel or central tower, etc., etc. The fort itself is composed of regular bastions, with a deep ditch, is casemated and mounted with guns of a very large calibre. I was unable to obtain exact information as to its armament, for a mysterious silence was kept on these points, and the governor being absent I could not obtain permission to visit its interior works. On the subject of the interior fortifications of their strong places the Russians are very reticent, in my opinion wisely, for the day might come when it would be by no means advantageous that all this should be clearly known. Although we frequently do take some trouble to gain an insight into the

defensive works of our neighbours, so moderate is the amount of encouragement which is given to those who do so, that it is extremely probable that we might enter upon a war in this country, as we have done in many others, without being practically acquainted either with the country itself, or with the nature of the defensive works which we should meet within it.

One radical fault, which the fort of Alexandropol appeared to me to possess, is that the natural ravines around it form screened approaches, and that from these ravines vast quantities of stone have been taken for building purposes; by which means these dangerous approaches have been actually improved for any enemy ready to take advantage of them.

Passing the Armenian burial-ground, we drove towards the Turkish frontier. On our road we saw a beautiful mountain covered with snow, rising out of the plain towards the west, called Allaquot. The Kurds, a rude people, live in this mountain in the summer, pasturing their sheep; while in winter they migrate to the wide plains at the foot of Mount Ararat. At the frontier there is no bridge over the river Arpachi, so that in a flood there would be no communication: an inconvenient circumstance, as from the bazaar at Alexandropol a large amount of goods and useful stores are daily taken into Turkey, the duty charged on the frontier being by no means excessive, and averaging not more than five per cent. *ad valorem*. It is singular that in this running stream the fish are said to be poisonous. This is accounted for by its being requisite, for the sake of the rice cultivation, to dam up the stream above, which renders the water stagnant and unwholesome; and this may, in a great measure, account for the fevers which are said to exist in this country.

During our drive through the town we saw three men being taken as prisoners to the castle. They had been committed for

the crime of murder, and their sentence was transporation for life to Siberia. Excepting for the most revolting descriptions of murder, or very serious political offences, Russians, or indeed natives of any part of these dominions, are seldom put to death, exile to Siberia being the usual punishment.

CHAPTER XLV.

FROM ALEXANDROPOL TO BORJOME.

On Monday morning, leaving the town of Alexandropol, with four good-looking horses attached to our tarantass, we halted close to the most considerable of the outworks of the fortress to regulate some of the harness of the horses. This gave us the opportunity of examining the ditches of the fort, the flank defences of which appeared most meagre, the ditch being only defended by one gun and loopholes for two muskets. The red stone castle, in the centre, was also a prominent feature for attack, but would soon probably share the fate of the Malakoff, at Sebastopol, which it somewhat resembled. On the first day's bombardment it would have its useless upper story knocked to pieces. The berme also appeared insufficient, and the construction of the ditches somewhat defective, for instead of being widened towards the flanking guns, the scarp and counterscarp are parallel. The masonry of the fortress itself is exposed to an extraordinary degree. We then proceeded to an open plain, apparently flat for many miles, which made it difficult for us to understand why a position for the fortress should not have been selected here, in preference to a site intersected by ravines.

In about three hours we reached a village called Baitar, a very appropriate name for a resting-place. An excellent lunch of roast chicken was soon cooked for us by our Cossack attendants, in

which we invited the naib to join us. Flaps of bread served us after the Arab fashion most conveniently for plates, napkins, and bread itself. The cooking fireplace was very ingenious; a large earthen pitcher, with a mouth one foot in diameter, was buried in the ground up to its neck. A hole in its side, six inches from the bottom, conducted by a stone channel up to the surface of the ground. To light the fire it was only needful to put in some straw and chips and gently blow down the channel, when the fire at once burned up. It could not be put out by wind, and the meat was nicely roasted over it. Its form caused great economy of fuel; in short, it was exactly on the same principle as our newly invented kitchen stoves. To put it out it was only requisite to stop up the channel, and cover the mouth with an earthen jar.

The carts laden with corn or merchandise were here invariably supplied with ropes made of twisted hair. Previous experience in India had taught me the value of these as far stronger and more durable than hemp; but I have never seen them adopted in Europe.

On leaving Baitar we crossed a branch of the River Arpachi, near to some Cossack outposts, the charge of this entire frontier being in the hands of these excellent troops. After about three hours' drive we entered Troidsky, a Russian settlement, near a large lake. We were received in a clean house by a charming old pair of industrious people, where we found every simple requisite we could desire: rezais or quilts of the country in profusion; the ever-ready Samovar with milk, eggs, and black bread at our command.

Troidsky is a settlement of the Troitses, believers in the Holy Ghost alone. The men somewhat resemble Germans, but their women certainly seem to have a Mongolian caste. The dress of the women is very singular; it is composed of very bright colours,

such as white, bright red, and bright green, made in a curious fashion. I understood these people to be called Badnokers, but from our imperfect knowledge of the language it is possible we were mistaken.

We left Troidsky at half-past 6 P.M. Although we were by no means at a high latitude, and the season was not advanced, yet the weather was exceedingly cold; ice covered the small lake, and not only the upper but even the lower mountains were white with snow.

The first village we came to was called Orloffsky, and in three hours more we reached a village exactly of the same character as Troidsky, which, I believe, was called Badnoker. A fine mountain called Abool, then covered with snow, overlooks this village. The Russians say that many deer are found there, but from the look of the country I have great doubts of this being the fact. Scarcely had we left this village when we were met by a police officer in a pericordinia with three horses. He was sent by the Palcovich, or civil superintendent, of Alhalkalakik to present his compliments to us, and to place his services at our disposal. I was really distressed that he should have sent such a distance—nearly twenty versts—to do us this honour; but it was another instance, added to the numberless ones already received, of consideration and attention on our journey.

About 2 P.M. we reached Alhalkalakik. A more uninteresting place I seldom saw; but with the assistance of the Palcovich, or chief magistrate, we obtained horses almost directly. A gentleman, who spoke the French language fluently, interpreted all our wishes. He was most useful to us, and informed us of the difficulties we might meet with on the road, and recommended us to remain for the night at the house of a Turkish Molah, or Mussulman priest, of the name of Jdhoos Khoon Effendi, at a curious old Turkish fortress on the upper part of the River Kuron.

I shall never forget the astonishment of this gentleman when we related how many weeks we had spent in Russia, the places we had visited so unfrequented by strangers, and the many hundreds of versts we had travelled with no knowledge of the Russian language.

At 3 P.M. we started for Kirkliss and Akhaltsikh. Having very good horses, we reached Nakalaky in two hours. The descent to this station, which is situated in the depth of a gorge between high mountains, was very abrupt. Sending a Cossack in advance to apprise the Molah of our intended arrival, we drove into Kirkliss, where, from its secluded position, probably no Englishman had been for years. The old Molah and his assistant, Arif Effendi, received us kindly in their rude hospitality. Here there was no one whatever to interpret for us in the Russian language; but fortunately Turkish is commonly spoken on the borders, therefore we managed to obtain all we required, and also to glean some interesting particulars concerning this curious and secluded valley. We went over the old castle, situated on a rock at the confluence of two rivers, and in a position quite impregnable before the days of powerful artillery. A very curious stone surmounted the principal doorway, which was richly carved in ancient characters: we were told these were Kurdish. The view of the valleys from this castle, at the junction of the rivers Ardahan and Kuron, was very grand. These rivers are said to contain quantities of fish, which the number of stone fishing-traps placed in the river seemed to confirm. They are represented to be of great size, and possibly may be the salmon which are stated to be so plentiful at Tiflis, and which, no doubt, mount the river for breeding purposes. I never saw a river which appeared more perfect for salmon-fishing: the runs and pools alternate, to any sportsman's delight.

About three miles from Kirkliss, and just within the Turkish

frontier, is a town called Kara Kama, where excellent carpets are made and sold at reasonable prices.

A CASTLE NEAR KIRKLIS.

The Molah's house, although made most welcome to us, was perhaps the meanest we had yet met in our travels; the windows devoid of glass, the divan broken and dirty; and we were so torn by vermin that we were glad to rise with the sun. The view of the old castle in the morning repaid us well for our detention; but although I tried the stream patiently with Brown's kill-devil, yet it was without effect.

We left the good old notary's house at half-past nine, and travelled with good horses to Edumulah. Provisions in this country must be very cheap, as we here saw a sheep killed which weighed about sixty pounds, and for which we were asked five shillings and sixpence, or a little more than one penny a pound; and bread is said to be proportionally cheap. From Edumulah there is a road branching north direct to Borjome, thus saving a considerable distance to any one desirous of going either to Tiflis or to the Black Sea. But as we were anxious to visit Alhaltsikh, we took a hilly road towards the west, and ere long obtained a view of this beautiful town, situated on a considerable stream, a castellated rock dominating the Armenian, the Jewish, as well as the new Russian quarters. On our arrival we drove to a very nice station-house; but the acting governor, Colonel Paul Taugren, at once invited us to his house, in the usual kindly manner. We then accompanied him in a drive through the town and a visit to the fort, where we called upon a fine old artillery officer, the commandant, who personally showed us over the fort. It is in a state to be impregnable from an insurrectionary movement, but certainly untenable, both from its position and its general antiquity, against an attack with modern means of war, and indeed I should very much doubt whether it would not crumble to pieces by the fire of the heavy guns which have been mounted upon it. Its position was very picturesque; from its summit we could discern the woods immediately above the springs of Abastuman, about twenty-two versts distant. These mineral waters are hot, and are considered very valuable in their properties. The place has lately been put under the control of the physician to the Grand Duke, and is being gradually converted into an agreeable summer resort; not perhaps that it is so much cooler, but that its trees are shady and pleasant, and present a pleasing contrast to the country which for many days we had travelled over. I

was told that near Abastuman were to be found plenty of royal stags; we saw the horns of many, and they appeared precisely similar to those of the Himalayas, and quite as large; from the crown of the head to the tip of the point they measured frequently more than forty inches. There were also said to be ibex in these mountains. In the fortress is a very handsome stone chapel, which has a fine gallery in the interior of its dome; this is now a Christian church, but was formerly a Mahomedan mosque; in it were some valuable silver-mounted painted tablets, the property of the regiment stationed here; these are carried with the troops when they move, and are deposited in the churches of the towns which they garrison. A large number of sick soldiers occupied a considerable building; these were the sick of the Southern Caucasus on their return from the springs of Abastuman. The commandant begged me to accept the hospitalities of his house, should we remain in the town. On descending from the castle we accepted the invitation of Colonel Paul Taugren to his home, and we were pleased to find that his wife, being partly of French origin, conversed with precision in that language. We spent a pleasant evening, when amongst other things she remarked, speaking of the education of Russian families of this period, that they were not content until it embraced a knowledge of the Russian, English, French, and German languages, which four must be spoken fluently by everyone in the rising generation who had the least pretension to education.

We expected our carriage to be ready at an early hour to start for Borjome; the wheels, being very shaky, had been taken off for repairs under the promise that they should be finished by the early morning. We waited an hour and a half, after which we proceeded into the yard, and measuring those of other government carriages we selected two pair, which with considerable trouble we adjusted to our carriage. The postmaster was in dismay at

this novelty; but we caused it to be explained to him that as all these carriages were government property, it could not make much difference, as long as the old wheels were in the Caucasus, in what part of it they should be found, and with the kind assistance of Colonel Taugren the matter was adjusted. About nine o'clock we got away. Nearly two versts from Akhaltsikh, stands a handsome monument to the Russian victories over their constant enemy, the Turk. At about half-past ten we reached Athouri, a curious old castle commanding the river Kuron. The road from Edumulah, to which I before alluded, joins in here. We now took an extra pair of horses, as we had been informed that the road was bad; but such proved to be by no means the case, and we should have done far better without them. The scenery in this beautiful valley began to improve every minute; magnificent mountains, as we threaded the margin of the stream, appeared to shut out further progress, and fine trees of dark foliage were a most agreeable change, after the sterile scenery to which we had lately been accustomed. A great deal of traffic appears to be carried on by this road, principally on the backs of pack-horses, of which we saw several droves. Stags are said to be found in this neighbourhood, and ibex in the mountains. Trout are also said to be plentiful in the river, and salmon; the latter of white colour, very large, and not good to eat. On nearing Borjome, fortunately when only one verst distant, the tire of one of our new wheels came off and broke in two, which obliged us to walk the rest of the way. We arrived about two in the afternoon, and, knowing of no hotel, we put up at the station-house, obtaining a small and dirty room, a passage in fact only to some inner rooms beyond, but we were glad to relinquish our tarantasse for any accommodation, however rude.

CHAPTER XLVI.

BORJOME.

Borjome is a quiet little retreat in the mountains. The spot was selected by Prince Waronzoff as a resting-place during the hot season, and he lived here for some years in a little cottage. The scenery in which it is placed is very charming: a long wooden bridge spans the stream in the middle of the town, and already many stone houses, in addition to a handsome bazaar, are in course of erection.

The palace of the Grand Duke is well situated and very handsome; it overlooks the river and the public gardens, which latter are prettily laid out in the English style, and, surrounded as Borjome is by magnificent mountains, with the rapid-running Kuron at their base, it is altogether one of the most beautiful mountain retreats imaginable. A junction with the railway near Suram, distant about twenty miles, would place Borjome in easy communication with the capital, Tiflis. The line would not be difficult, and would increase the value of property and promote the growth of the town.

As soon as her Imperial Highness the Grand Duchess heard of our arrival she sent the marechal of her court to request that we would visit her, at the same time informing us that rooms and entertainment were at our disposal in the house allotted to

the staff of his Imperial Highness the Grand Duke, during our stay in Borjome, and commanding us to dine with her on the following day. Her Imperial Highness, who is daughter of the Grand Duke of Baden, has the most charming and gracious manner; she speaks English perfectly, and, at our interview, was pleased to take the most lively interest in our travels through a country so seldom visited by travellers from the west of Europe. After our painful and long journey, the comfortable rooms and excellent fare thus hospitably placed at our disposal were most thoroughly appreciated; an easy bed in a large and well-furnished room making up for the hardships of wooden settees and miserable dirty cabins—an exchange only understood by those who have been placed in similar circumstances.

The following morning was devoted to rest and reflection upon our tour, which was now drawing to its close, as, in a few days, we hoped to be again upon the Black Sea on our return to Europe. In the afternoon we obeyed her Imperial Highness's commands to dine: a carriage, arriving at the hour indicated, took us to the palace. We were rewarded by a very pleasant evening; it happened to be the jour de fête of the Grand Duchess, and we were happy to be present to add our felicitations to those of so many others, who evidently felt the good wishes they expressed. We met about twenty persons in all, various members of the household, in addition to five of the royal children. The eldest son of her Imperial Highness is about fourteen years of age, and is one of the handsomest and most intelligent boys I ever met, and the little ones are quite charming. The family comfort and ease which surround everything, although no court etiquette is omitted, gives an additional charm to this royal circle. The writing-room of the Duke is furnished in the most perfect oriental style, somewhat after the council-chamber of the Shah's palace at Erivan, which has been previously described.

On Thursday, the 21st of September, we mounted again into our humble little tarantasse. Some repairs had been done to the tire of the broken wheel, for which the blacksmith demanded four roubles. The same work would have been done much better in old England for less than one. I thought it best, however, to give him within half a rouble of his demand, which he was only too delighted to pocket, and we started along the beautiful mountain road for Suram. A general progress pervades the whole district. At Suram, the central point at which the roads from Poti, Tiflis, and Borjome meet, there appeared to be a large amount of posting, and great activity. At the station-house there were at least a dozen carriages changing horses, starting or arriving. The posting road was excellent, and the arrangements speedy and effective.

Not very far beyond Suram, on the Poti road, we came upon the new railway: it is now only in course of construction, and is the first and only one on the eastern side of the Black Sea. It was agreeable to meet again with some of our own countrymen, and to hear our own language; for the construction of the line being undertaken by an English company, almost all the engineers and foremen of works are of our nation. The line itself was already completed from Poti to Tilliwill, through a flat marshy forest. The remainder of the distance to Tiflis is also completed in detached parts; but it will be long before it is entirely finished, as in some places difficulties arise from the soil slipping in huge masses down the mountain sides, rendering it almost impossible to obtain a solid foundation for a road. This, indeed, constitutes the main difficulty of constructing roads in the Caucasus.

I may mention that the telegraph posts in the Caucasus are everywhere complete, and the telegraph in working order, joining all the principal towns and stations in the country; but I was surprised to see that iron posts were everywhere being substituted

for those of wood. Considering that a large portion of this country is one immense forest, where suitable posts could be easily cut and erected for thirty pence each, I cannot understand why the government should incur so great an expense as to purchase iron ones from England, which must, I imagine, have each cost at least as many shillings.

There was nothing particular to remark on the way to Tilliwill, except the gigantic and luxuriant forest, which extended on all sides for hundreds of square miles. At Bellagora the postmaster demanded more than the government price for the horses, and when asked for brandy he tendered bottles labelled "French cognac," but which, when we requested he would open one, he at once confessed to be common rum, and those labelled "Sherry," to contain very common wine of the country. I mention this to put travellers on their guard, as no trust can be placed in the people, and it is requisite, therefore, at all times to keep a look out in such matters.

A traveller in this country is compelled to set aside all traditionary English ideas of a dislike to distrust his fellows. In self-defence he must practise a certain amount of suspicion; he must ask beforehand the price of his room and meals; and he must be suspicious of his bottle, though it be labelled foreign wine.

At about 4 P.M. we reached Tilliwill, the first of the towns in the low, flat country beneath the mountains. The station-master was very obliging, giving us the only room at his disposal, the last we should probably occupy in a station-house, and perhaps the most dirty we had yet inhabited; but we were very grateful for it.

Here we bade adieu to our poor old rattling tarantasse, which had, with sundry repairs, carried us over eight hundred and ninety-three versts of roads, many of them wild and rough. It had been a great convenience to be able to retain the use

of this one carriage, instead of being compelled to change it at every station during this long journey.

The country of Imeritia is perhaps naturally the richest in the world, the inhabitants claiming for it the original position of the Garden of Eden. The hills are covered with magnificent forest trees, of which the most valuable kinds, such as the oak and the walnut, are very prominent. To the elm trees are attached luxuriantly growing vines, producing the richest grapes, which, but for the ignorance or idleness of the inhabitants, would produce the finest wine. Almost every kind of grain grows spontaneously, and the valleys throw up the finest pastures. The mountains are said to produce minerals, of which gold forms by no means the smallest part; and the golden fleeces, to carry away which Jason came to the country, are not, even at the present [illegible] entirely unknown, for in certain places fleeces are now [illegible]ed in unfrequented streams in the mountains, and, after remaining some considerable time in the hollows and eddies beneath the water, are carefully washed, when particles of gold in no inconsiderable quantities are shaken from them.

On the morning of the 22nd September, we were up at five, the time stated for the departure of the train being 6 A.M. The clever waiter so hurried our departure as to cause us to forget the change in payment of our account. Running across a common of wet grass, we reached the station, among a crowd of passengers, shortly before the time named for the departure of the train. The ticket-clerk, however, had not arrived, nor did he appear until after the hour named for departure; and then he stated that it was very hard to be disturbed at his early tea. This, of course, caused much confusion and delay, more especially as a multitude of cheques and counter-cheques, the delight of small officials, were insisted upon. The guards were dressed in a sort of military uniform, well buckled in at

the waist. They gave themselves great airs, forbidding the very smallest of portmanteaus to enter a carriage, but freely allowing the most enormous sack. The carriages were very comfortable; they were made in France, but upon the American car system—containing washing-rooms, in which, however, there was no water. At seven we started. The line is smooth, and appears firm. The iron rails are brought from Belgium; the superintending workmen and the machinery are English.

We passed through an immense forest, rank with vegetation, and profusely luxuriant, but marshy and damp. In small cleared spots the Indian corn grew freely; enormous vines in the midst of the forest encircled the largest trees. With lofty mountains on either side, at a distance of fifteen or twenty miles, this close-wooded scenery continued until we reached the town and port of Poti.

We came with certainty to one conclusion, that it was very fortunate we had adopted in our journey the Caspian route, and that we had travelled from the north through the Caucasian mountains; for had we merely taken the rail from Poti, and returned by the same route, which we were constantly recommended to do, we should have lost all the interesting scenery and the pleasant incidents which I have endeavoured to describe in the previous chapters.

CHAPTER XLVII.

POTI AND ITS RAILWAY.

About half-past eleven we reached the terminus of the railway at Poti, which is on the north side of the river Rion, and, having hired a small boat and transferred our effects into it, we crossed over to the town on the south side. Here we unfortunately selected Jacob's hotel. We afterwards ascertained that we should have done better had we gone to the Caucase. The railway has already made a great change in the value of property at Poti. That which was a few years since perfectly valueless now bears a high price, and had Poti anything of a harbour there can be no doubt but that it would soon become a large city. The river Rion, which is by no means a large one, has a bar across its mouth, which is so shallow that the breakers are at all times seen upon it, preventing entry or departure when there is any wind and sea.

Every exertion should have been made by Russia to obtain possession of the port of Batoum, about sixty miles to the south, which is still in the hands of Turkey. If Russia, in the days of Nicholas, had not bent all her thoughts on grasping conquest, but had turned them to the development of commerce, possessing such a magnificent territory as the Trans-Caucasus, she could, I believe, have persuaded Turkey to surrender, either in exchange or for direct payment, the harbour of Batoum, the natural

formation of which renders it capable of being easily improved, so as to allow vessels of considerable size and tonnage to enter at all times. But instead of this, Russia attempted by force of arms to ruin Turkey, which in the sequel has thrown back her own development. However, as regards Batoum it may not even now be too late; and surely to endeavour peaceably to make some arrangement with Turkey to obtain this port, which is of so much less value to her than to Russia, would be wiser than to alarm her by expending large sums of money on warlike preparations at Nicolaef, or on an ironclad steam fleet in the Black Sea. Should Russia possess Batoum, she could easily construct a railroad about fifteen or twenty miles inland to join that which has been finished from Poti, and thus be in the possession of certain communications with the sea at all times. No amount of expenditure can make Poti a port of certain entry. It would be dangerous, therefore, to count too much upon the future greatness of Poti, when so dangerous a rival as Batoum lies so close to it.

The railway to Tiflis was, I understand, first undertaken by an English company, which after some time got into difficulties, and it was then proceeded with by a French company, which again in its turn had to give place to another English one, which now, with the assistance of the Russian government, bids fair to complete it. A notice of the completion of the rail from Poti to Tiflis has since appeared in the *Times* (October, 1872). A large number of soldiers are placed at the disposal of the engineers on working pay, which is very low, varying from a small quantity of extra bread to sixpence per diem. The soldiers, I was told, complained of this poor pay, and said that in many instances their officers kept a portion of it; but I believe the truth is that by the arrangements of their service a considerable share of their working pay is placed in a regimental chest, for the

benefit of those who are performing military duties, whilst their comrades do the work of artisans, etc., etc.—a very fair arrangement. The native labourers generally were represented as both weak and idle, and far inferior to our navvies.

The artisans also may be said to be far inferior to ours. A bet was made that an English carpenter would, in twelve hours, do more work at oak-post making than four native carpenters. They commenced at six A.M. In ten hours and a half the Englishman had finished thirty-four posts, the four natives having done only thirty-one, and seeing they had no chance the latter gave in; and thus upon the whole, although the English work at much higher prices, yet they may be looked upon as not so expensive as the natives, who are uncertain, and whose work is certainly inferior.

It seems rather doubtful whether the railway will be a success as an investment. The expense of constructing it will be enormous. The sliding nature of the soil in the mountains through which it passes will certainly cause much outlay and trouble; and although doubtless when trade is shut off the common roads it must adopt the rail, yet there are limits to this; for should the expense of transit be increased, the Persian trade may then to a large extent adopt the line of Erzeroom and Trebizonde, and thus avoid the Russian territory entirely, which would cause a considerable injury to Tiflis, as well as to the country generally. Here, therefore, is the danger, for already the sum demanded for two second-class tickets equals the price of posting the same distance for two persons in one carriage; and if the price of freight should be charged in the same proportion, there will be no encouragement given to this thrifty people to make use of the rail in preference to the road.

The sickness amongst the English employed on the railway works is indeed terrible; the low marshy lands of Imeritia,

encumbered with forests, are a very hot-bed of fever, and a very large number are compelled every season to give in and return home. Twenty-three engineers and sixteen artisans had died during the last three years.

The natives generally are well behaved, and are as a rule much afraid of our workmen; but occasionally robberies, and even with violence, are committed. A railway pay clerk told us that about three weeks previously, his house had been broken into by a party armed with swords. They were tempted by the knowledge of his having a large sum of money for the purpose of paying off certain workmen who were returning to England. Immediately that the party had forced his door open, he fired his revolver at the first man, and shot him in the stomach, and he fell forward on the table; the rest then dashing on, threw a blanket over the head of the clerk, and then searched every corner for the roubles. In the meantime, a friend who was sleeping in the adjoining room, was awakened by the sound of the pistol, and jumping up rushed out of the house calling loudly for assistance. This alarmed the robbers, who made off hastily, and without discovering the money which had been hid in the stove pipe.

Poti on the whole is a most disagreeable, feverish place, with nothing worthy of notice; it is so low that the Black Sea, although close, cannot be seen from any part of the town. The swamps which surround it throw out most dangerous fogs and agues, and the houses are infested by noxious vermin, the most impure of which are so common that the residents keep a wash ready prepared to purify themselves from their attacks.

On the morning of our departure, I saw a fine brown bear skin amongst the baggage of an Imeritian gentleman. I inquired if he was a sportsman and had killed the animal. He said he was very fond of the chase, and killed plenty of ducks and pheasants, and also quails; "but bears and wild boars I do not go

near, for they might kill me. When I want their skins or tusks I buy them, for that is much safer."

The Imeritians seem a poor and mean-spirited race, otherwise they would have made a better defence, and would not have allowed their country to fall under the yoke of the stranger.

Although Mount Elbrutz is so far inland, yet owing to its great height it can frequently be seen from Poti. On this occasion, however, the weather was unfortunately too clouded and overcast to enable us to see it.

On the 24th September we entered a small steamer of very light draught of water, which was to take us over the bar of the river Rion and convey us to Batoum, where we should be again transferred into one of the Russian Company's steam-ships for conveyance to Constantinople. Our boat was named to sail at ten o'clock; but in consequence of the examination of passports and police formalities, it was two P.M. before we left the quay. While we were waiting the departure of the boat, we were surprised to see our friend and fellow-traveller, Viscount Figanière, who, hearing we were in Poti, had sought us out. He, however, could not accompany us on our visit to the southern shores of the Black Sea, but came to bid us farewell before he started by the northern shores on his return to St. Petersburg. He told us that when he left us at Astrakhan, he ascended the Volga to Nijni-Novgorod, and made a most interesting inspection of the fair; but learning that the best time for travelling in the mountains of the Caucasus was the autumn, and rather repenting his not having accompanied us, he again descended the river and arrived a second time at Astrakhan. Thence he followed the exact route we had taken, but much more rapidly, until he arrived at Tiflis; and hearing on the road, from some railway engineers, that we were but a short distance in advance, he found us, just as we were actually on board and on the point of

departure. He had accomplished the whole tour from Petrolvks through Daghestan and the Dariel to Tiflis and Poti in sixteen days. Holding the position of ambassador, he had been furnished with a courier-padarogna—without which so rapid a journey would have been simply impossible. We compared notes as far as the few minutes of his stay on board would permit. He was most interested with our accounts of what he had not seen—Erivan, Mount Ararat, and the Convent of Etchmiazin.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

TRAVELLING IN THE CAUCASUS.

We had now been thirty-seven days in the Caucasus, during which time we had travelled 1340 versts. We had traversed Daghestan and the Lesghian mountains almost from one end to the other—a country scarcely known more than by name in Europe. We had seen some of the most magnificent scenery and some of the highest mountains in the world, and the view of Ararat and Kasbec was enough to repay us for our toil, and to console us for our want of time to visit Elbrutz. I believe it would have been difficult to have seen more than we did during the period we were in the country, nor did any circumstances cause us to regret the line of travel which, in a great measure, chance and good fortune had caused us to pursue. Before leaving, therefore, this beautiful and interesting country, I will here add a few remarks on travelling in it, hoping that they may be of use to any future traveller in a country so little known.

Four questions embody the usual inquiries of persons contemplating this tour. First, What is the best season of the year for it? Secondly, What is the best route to enter the country by? Thirdly, What time is required? and, Fourthly, What is the expense? I could myself obtain no satisfactory answers to these questions either in England or at Constantinople. I was told that in summer the heat of Tiflis was insupportable, and the

forests of Imeritia, through which we must pass, so deadly, that it was impossible to travel through them without danger of fever. But to reach the country by northern routes was a mystery which no one that I met could unravel.

Having now accomplished this feat, and having gained no little experience, I have no hesitation in saying, in answer to these questions, first, that the late summer or autumn is the best season; secondly, that the route by the Caspian and Petrolvks is the best entrance; thirdly, that the college vacation of four months is sufficient for a rapid, but not too hurried tour; and, fourthly, that the expense is not greater than for the same time in any other part of Europe. I have formed these opinions on the following grounds:—First, during the summer, when the heat in Tiflis and the Crimea is quite unbearable, the weather in the mountain ranges of Lesghia and in all Daghestan is delightfully cool and agreeable. The mountains, covered with perpetual snow, temper the atmosphere of the whole country and render travelling during the hottest part of the day not only bearable but pleasant. The autumn has, moreover, other advantages. The sky is generally clearer and more free from rain than in the spring, so that the views are more distinct and the rivers are not rendered difficult or impassable; it is also the best season for large game shooting. Secondly, the route by the Caspian is the best, because it enables the traveller to see a good deal of Southern Russia and the Crimea, a point of great interest to an Englishman, also a large portion of the Cossack country on the Don, the Volga, the singular city of Astrakhan, and the Caspian Sea; besides enabling him to enter at once upon the mountain ranges of Daghestan—the most interesting portion of the country—without previous exposure to the enormous heat of the Trans-Caucasus or the fevers of the forests of Imeritia. Thirdly, that four months are sufficient to take a fair view of the country, I trust the previous

chapters have demonstrated, including, as they do, a visit to Constantinople and the Crimea. A more lengthened period would, doubtless, be preferable, as it would give an opportunity of visiting the springs of Petigorse, and Mount Elbrutz, and, perhaps, Bakoo, or of making a run into Persia. In that case I should recommend the traveller to start in May and to proceed by Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Northern Russia, then passing down the Volga to reach Astrakhan about the end of July; thence by the Caspian to Petrolvks, and thus to give up August and September to Daghestan and the Cis-Caucasus, including a visit to Petigorse and Elbrutz, and then passing through the Dariel Pass at the beginning of October, to give that month and possibly November to the Trans-Caucasus or southern side of the mountains, and thence to return viâ Poti and the Crimea to Odessa. Fourthly, that the cost of such a tour need not exceed what would be required in any other part of Europe, is proved by our own case, for although we enjoyed every comfort to be obtained, yet the expenses of each, from the time of leaving England to our return—a period of one hundred and twenty-four days—amounted to only £136 8*s*. 3*d*.

This kind of information travellers are generally very unwilling to impart; but I consider it a valuable detail, and one without which many men might be deterred from entering upon a tour somewhat novel in its character. We invariably went to the best hotels, and travelled in the best steamboats, and very seldom in the second class on railroads; in posting we never took less than three horses, and occasionally five.

The Caucasus being so little known, I trust it will not be considered tedious if I give some further general information as regards travelling in that country and in Southern Russia.

In Daghestan the only satisfactory way of travelling is on horseback; and arrangements could certainly be made either in

Petrolvks or in Temir-han-Tsura to hire horses by the month. I must, however, impress upon the stranger the necessity of exercising the utmost vigilance in recording his bargain on paper, in presence of some of the authorities before starting. On reaching Grosnia, posting will be preferable for the rest of the stay in the Caucasus, and if he could there purchase a strong and sound tarantasse with a hood, I should recommend him to do so. It will then be left to his own inventive genius to improve its comforts by means of rope seats, etc. This carriage he will eventually part with, probably at Tiflis, and, it may be hoped, without very considerable loss. If the intention is to remain any time in the mountains, for the purpose, for instance, of following large game, then a small tent should form part of the equipage; in any case, however, a strongly-made English saddle should be taken, and also a strong basket containing a few tin plates, cups, and a saucepan or two, teapot, etc., with a supply, in a separate well-made box, of preserved soup—Liebig—and preserved vegetables, chocolate, all in a concentrated form, and a supply of Cognac. Sugar, macaroni, and rice can be procured in the villages, and tea should be bought, from time to time, in the larger towns,

Some simple medicines are on no account to be forgotten, especially a supply of quinine; and, if a considerable stay in the wilder parts is contemplated, it is desirable to know that the bread is unleavened, and therefore a small supply of English baking-powder and some slight instruction as to using it before starting, would be of great service. A supply of knicknacks, especially if they be of steel ware, for small presents, may occasionally smooth the way to obtain what even money would fail to purchase. In regard to bedding, it must be borne in mind that throughout Russia everyone carries with him, as a standing rule, a good-sized soft pillow, and generally his bedding also. The usual

comforts of home must be ignored, and a good-sized macintosh cloak and a thick rug be adopted; and if, in addition to this, a pair of Indian drawers, as a substitute for sheets, and a Persian carpet for a mattress are taken, everything that is requisite, and that can be carried without great impediment, will be at hand. In the majority of the hotels in Southern Russia, except in the capital cities, neither sheets nor towels are supplied—the charge for the apartment does not include them; and if asked for, even on payment, they are not always forthcoming. For baggage I recommend two strong portmanteaus, with strong linen bags to cover them, and with loops to enable them to be attached together and slung over the baggage horse. A strong cotton umbrella and a macintosh sheet must not be omitted.

Tweed or light woollen clothing should always be used; and I should observe that an easy blue cloth frock coat and dark trousers will be useful articles of dress, resembling the costume worn by the Russians on occasions of hospitality, when the shooting coat, which is adopted at all times by some of our travellers, would not be understood; and, as the Russians invariably dress in uniform, they might justly consider it a slight, were no other costume used at dinner than the rough shooting coat.

In all hotels a large samovar is placed in a position of easy access, a trifling charge being made for its use; and the usual practice is for every one to possess his own tea and teapot, and to purchase for himself the bread or biscuit he requires for his early breakfast. At the posting-houses, generally, no regular dinner can be procured, the food for this must be brought or purchased as best you can—a little black bread, with milk and eggs, can usually be bought, but even these not always. The samovar is universally to be had, and the only furniture is a hard wooden couch, a table, and some common chairs. For this reason, therefore, it is requisite at all times to be prepared with a supply of

tea, sugar, bread, or good biscuits, and any other luxuries that may be considered desirable; the strong travelling basket above recommended will carry these.

I need not impress upon anyone, who knows what travelling is, the benefits he will derive from ingratiating himself with the authorities, or how useful good letters of recommendation may prove to him; or, again, the absolute necessity there is for the constant exercise of the virtue of patience. I consider the Russians to be the best-tempered nation in the world, and the readiest to help strangers. The lower classes are dull, inactive, and very unintelligent, and sometimes with them it is by no means a bad plan to pretend to lose one's temper, which, so far from making them lose theirs, has generally the effect of quickening and sharpening their movements. The Circassians and also the Georgians are entirely different, and will sometimes resent a slight injury with the dagger. The Turks, on the other hand, if you show anger will set you down as a foreign madman, and will leave you to help yourself in your difficulties.

In travelling the utmost amount of patience will sometimes be called into requisition, on account of detentions in regard to post-horses. The word, "Sichas—Sichas," "directly" "instantly," will be again and again repeated, meaning anything or nothing. The traveller may see many carriages arrive subsequently to his own, and get supplied with horses before him; these may, possibly, have government orders, but, in any case, his best method is to be diplomatic and court the favour of the postmaster; but if he can obtain special letters, by all means let him do so.

Russian gentlemen generally possess their own travelling carriages, which they keep for the especial purpose of posting. This carriage is a strong britzka, fixed upon long poles or perches—the longer and more springy these poles are the easier the carriage

rides. But for those who do not possess their own, the post provides carts. These are of two kinds—the tarantasse, a cart fitted on pliant poles, and sometimes with a cover, and the pericodinia, an open cart, resembling the half of a large barrel cut longitudinally, and fixed strongly on to the wheels. They are much rougher than any private carriage, because they are much shorter and, therefore, have less spring on their poles, or perches. As the pericodinia must be changed at every stage, a low shifting seat might rudely be arranged to be used with any cart, since these carts have no seat provided, a network of rope being generally substituted; but it is very troublesome to have to renew this at each stage.

This or any other substitute for springs must, however, entirely depend upon the intelligence of the traveller. No one could believe how little inventive power the Russians possess. They seem perfectly incapable either of invention or improvement in machinery, and for mechanism of all kinds they depend upon western Europe. As a proof of this I may adduce the fact, that scarcely ever has a patent been taken out by any Russian. Yet it is a singular fact that they are very conceited, and imagine that no nation can excel them in the arts and sciences.

The horses are all taught to travel without blinkers. They perfectly understand the commands of the driver by voice, and generally three horses are harnessed abreast. Travellers are sometimes specially permitted to take post-horses off the regular line, and keep them for one or more days' journey, but such a permission is very exceptional. In addition to the modes of travelling above spoken of, there is another which, however, is comparatively very expensive, that of hiring from the government a special carriage and courier. This costs about five times as much as the common posting, and is seldom employed except by large families going to or returning from the mineral waters or other summer excursions.

I have entered somewhat into detail upon the above subject in consequence of the great difficulties which we at first met with from a want of knowledge respecting it. As regards a knowledge of the Russian language it is possible to travel without it, but I do not conceal the fact that it is far more agreeable to be accompanied by an interpreter. To travel without a considerable fluency in French I consider would be very irksome, if not impossible, for with the exception of His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke we met no Russian between Petrolvks on the Caspian and Tiflis who could converse in the English language, and although we made every endeavour in London before starting to procure a Russian and English vocabulary, we were unable to do so. Surely some one acquainted with both languages will supply this deficiency.

At present there is but one railroad in the Caucasus, that from Poti to Tiflis. About one-third of the entire distance, or about seventy miles, was at that time completed and open for traffic. Since our return the whole has been completed and opened. Other lines are in contemplation, and when any of them are finished an immense assistance will be afforded to the traveller; and these magnificent mountains will no longer remain unvisited and unknown. As for hotels in southern Russia I may say they are inferior to all others in Europe. They are dirty to an incredible degree, and none of the rooms are fitted with the commonest articles of bed-room furniture. If after a dusty drive you desire to wash, a dirty waiter will bring a basin the size of a sugar bowl, and a ewer the size of a cream-jug, and holding one in each hand, he offers to pour a few drops over your fingers, with which apology for a wash you are expected to be satisfied. As far as my experience goes, there is not a bathing tub in southern Russia, while every hotel swarms with little animals that cause you to remember the sleepless nights you were compelled to

endure. The cuisine universally is of the most indigestible kind, compelling the traveller to depend in a great measure upon tea and biscuits. The charges in most of the hotels are excessive, and sometimes extortionate. The servants are a very bad lot, lazy, very dirty, and prompt to tell lies; and few can imagine how uncleanly they are, until they have been compelled to depend upon their services. I wish I could write more favourably, but I am bound to say the truth, and painful experience (excepting at the Hôtel de l'Europe at Tiflis, which has all the qualities of a good hotel) have forced these facts upon me. Railroads and communication with the people of western Europe, will no doubt gradually cure a great many of these evils, as soon as they become perceptible to the bulk of the educated community itself. There is no nation in the world who can bear discomforts of travel and rough it so well as the Russians. Long habit has no doubt reconciled them to this, but when they are shown how easily these evils may be remedied by a small amount of industry and circumspection, and how valuable is the practice of cleanliness and decency, they no doubt will follow the more polished countries, where these virtues are so highly esteemed and universally practised.

As I am very desirous that this volume should be found useful in smoothing the path to future travellers, I have added in an appendix certain posting tables, most of which I have selected, as far as the regular posting roads existed, from the Imperial Posting Guide. In respect to the other roads the distances and posting fees are given according to the prices paid by us.

It might be argued, that where a postal guide exists I need not trouble my readers with these extracts; but it must be borne in mind that the guide is in the Russian language, and that it is exceedingly difficult to find any one with sufficient patience to assist the traveller in translating the names of all these posting

stations, and also to do, what he assuredly could not travel without doing, carefully write out every station, and its distance on the line he intended to take. This labour of some hours was kindly undertaken for me by Mr. Rice, and I was very grateful to him for it; it proved of inestimable value to us when paying for our horses, or calculating our time and distances; and I cannot but believe it will prove equally useful to other travellers.

CHAPTER XLIX.

GEORGIA UNDER THE RUSSIANS.

THE rise in the value of property in the government of the Caucasus, within the last few years, is quite extraordinary. Land, which in Tiflis was sold some years since by the acre, is now sold by the yard, the yard now realising the former price of the acre.

After the occupation of the country by the Russians, the Georgians could not understand or appreciate the good fortune which made everything belonging to them positively their own, and, like all Orientals, being more ready to imitate the vices than the virtues of their masters, they entered into all sorts of extravagancies, the cost of which could only be met by the sacrifice of their fortunes and their lands. Their wives also, not content with their former rich and beautiful costumes, were fain to adopt those of Parisian modistes ; and good Madame Bott was ready enough to indulge them, and supply them with articles at her own prices, on the simple condition of their husbands countersigning their orders. When the day of reckoning arrived, then their fair lands, once so wild and valueless, were sacrificed to their debts of folly, and, by their extravagance, Madame has been enabled to return to Paris, to live, it is said, in luxury, and even magnificence; her splendid silver plate and Oriental salvers and goblets being the envy of all beholders.

Besides this, very large tracts of land were confiscated for rebellion, and were either sold for the benefit of the State or were presented to deserving officers; and thus, after the last great war, the stability of the Government being insured, trade increasing, and Shamyl conquered, the value of land increased with astonishing rapidity.

Besides the lands in the Trans-Caucasus, I may mention the vast tracts north of the mountains, especially those on the Kuban river, which are reported to be of prodigious luxuriance. This country used to be continually ravaged by the Circassians, but now that tranquillity prevails, these lands are being cultivated, and repay most bountifully the labour bestowed upon them.

Again, near Taman, on the straits of Yenikali, great natural riches have been discovered—in coal mines as well as naphtha springs. Neither of these are as yet fully developed, but they will no doubt, ere long, be rendered most profitable.

Towards Stravapol, and in the vicinity of Vladicaveas, astonishing progress is being made in agriculture. Prince Mirsky informed me that his brother this year refused fifty thousand roubles for an estate which, two years previously, he had purchased for twenty-five thousand.

As regards commercial pursuits, the French in Tiflis have long taken the lead, and, singularly enough, although there are no foreign goods more in request than those from England, yet I do not know of a single English mercantile house in the country.

The walnut wood trade, which is very extensive—the forests of Imeritia in the neighbourhood of Poti abounding in beautiful timber of this kind,—has been monopolised by the French, who have turned it to great profit in their fabrics at Marseilles, shaving the walnut wood into fine veneers. The intelligent and

industrious Monsieur Hervieu, the correspondent of Messrs. Coutts, is reported to be rapidly making a noble fortune.

Of course, speculations by foreigners occasionally meet with discouragement, as Mr. R., an élève of Prince Waronzoff, and son of the builder of the beautiful palace at Alupka, in the Crimea, can testify. He was induced, after some persuasion, to set up a steam saw-mill in Tiflis. He brought out many artificers from home, made contracts for supplying sawn timber, and, through his command of machinery, it was clearly seen that the market was falling into his hands. But, alas, one bright summer morning his visions of wealth, together with his mill, vanished into thin air. The native sawyers, taking alarm, and fearing their occupation would be gone, determined on the destruction of the mill. A small box of matches soon rendered it a thing of the past. The sawyers returned to their saw-pits, and Mr. R. was deprived in a few minutes of the profits of a long and laborious life.

In addition to the products of the country, such as silk, cotton, tobacco, and wine—all of which are increasing immensely—the metals, such as silver, copper, and iron are receiving much attention; and moreover a considerable trade in horses is springing up —those bred in Georgia within the Russian territory are said to possess as fine blood as any in Persia, or indeed in Arabia; and those from the Kuban, which are principally for draught, are extremely docile as well as hardy. I should think from what I have seen of the horses from the frontiers of Persia that a profitable speculation might be made by purchasing them for the English market, and taking them home in the vessels which now carry out iron for the railroads to that country. This I believe to be by no means so difficult an enterprise as might be imagined.

The native population of the mountains in Lesghia and all Daghestan has probably decreased in number since the Russian

conquest in 1858, a great many of the Mahomedans having elected to emigrate to Turkey, taking up their residence near Varna and other places in Bulgaria; so great indeed has this exodus been, that it has been computed, and I believe upon good authority, that more than five hundred thousand have emigrated into Turkey alone. This cannot be on account of the exactions of the Russian Government, for no country can be more lightly taxed, the only direct impost being that of one rouble, or about two shillings and eightpence, upon each house or family. The road service, the only one they are compelled to give gratuitously, is the only obligation which can be considered heavy and onerous; but as road-making is a perfect passion with the Russians, and is carried to an extraordinary extent in this mountainous country, it forms a very painful burden upon the inhabitants.

I believe that there are still many parts of the Western Caucasus into which the Russians have as yet not penetrated; to call this country, however, unconquered would be an error, and yet it would be incorrect to consider the inhabitants under perfect subjection, since even now the troops cannot march through parts of it. The fact is that the natural fortresses, such as mountains, ravines, and crags possess, if possible, greater capabilities of defence in the country west of Elbrutz than even in Daghestan; and it is possible that Russia, after the heavy experience of thirty years' war in the Caucasus, may deem it wiser to let circumstances take their course, in the reasonable hope that trade may gradually accomplish in silence that which the sword could only effect after an immense loss of blood and treasure, and a vast amount of misery.

I related to some Russian officers the policy we pursued in the East under similar circumstances, where we have used our best endeavours to keep out of mountain wars, such as those with the

fanatical Swat and Bonair tribes, exemplifying our policy, to their great amusement, by saying that in India we had a rich fruit with a very hard shell;—I alluded to the fine plains of India, bounded by her rugged line of mountains,—and that we contented ourselves by fattening on the fruit, and leaving the shell as much as possible alone, adding that, whenever we meddled with the latter, we were quite sure to regret it.

As regards the question of the advances of Russia on Constantinople I do not believe there is much danger of this—at least for the present. Russia is now using every endeavour to perfect her system of railroads, and consolidate her outlying provinces. Moreover, there is a large party, especially in the north, who do not view the annexation of Constantinople with any pleasure or satisfaction. They fear that St. Petersburg, like Turin to Rome, would have to give place to the beautiful and charmingly-situated Queen of the Bosphorus, and that the interests of old Russia in the more sterile north would be postponed to those of the luxuriant and fruitful south. But still I think it behoves the Turk to keep a cautious eye in a northern direction, and certainly not to facilitate the approaches of his ancient enemy by placing any temptation in his path, as, for example, by permitting iron-clads made at St. Petersburg, or purchased from foreign countries, to pass the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus into the Black Sea.

CHAPTER L.

THE RUSSIAN ARMY.

THE armies of Russia are supposed in peace time to consist of thirty-three thousand officers, and eight hundred thousand men; in war time of forty thousand officers and one million two hundred thousand men. Of this army about one-tenth is artillery, and one-fortieth pioneers. This seems an enormous force; but taking into consideration the size of the Russian dominions, and the uses to which the troops are put, the numbers do not appear excessive. The countries in which certain of these troops are stationed seem in a measure fixed, and neither regiments nor officers are, like ours, continually shifting. The Russian army, in addition to being at all times prepared for war, is also always employed upon military works, and thus the government, in return for feeding and clothing their soldiers, and a trifle for daily pay, gain the work which otherwise would cost them a very considerable outlay.

The soldiers of the army of the Caucasus are employed as masons, sawyers, carpenters, blacksmiths, painters, bricklayers; they make their own clothing as tailors and as shoemakers; they collect their own forage as haymakers, bring in from the forest on their own carts, and with their own horses, the wood they consume, and the turf which they have cut and collected. Thus this army is almost entirely independent of civil labour. Their military exercises are by no means neglected or lost sight

of in their civil employments; but the entire time of the soldier is not divided, as in most European armies, between learning war and enjoying pleasure, and the civilian artisan has not been taught to think that the rights of civil labour are invaded by the soldier being trained to do things for himself. The present term of service to a conscript is eight years, and very few soldiers re-engage. This comparatively short service is not approved of by the officers, who complain, like ours, that they lose their best men just when they become most efficient soldiers, and that the government have thus a double loss, losing both good soldiers and good artificers. The country generally, however, must gain immensely by having each year nearly one hundred thousand young men distributed throughout it, who for the last eight years have been taught obedience, habits of order, and industry, and instructed in some particular trade, able also at any moment to turn out and strengthen their armies, should the occasion for their services arise.

It is very difficult to state the numbers of the Russian troops in the Caucasus at the present time, accounts differing by many thousands; but I am inclined to believe they may amount to about one hundred and fifty thousand men, and, in addition, they have a large number of Cossacks on the Kuban, and a very large number of native militia all over the country, which latter act as a sort of military police—a prodigious army for the size and present position of this country; but as they consider it requisite still to build forts, barracks, and other public works, and employ their military labour for this purpose, this large force represents both army and public workmen.

The private soldiers of the army are paid at the same rate as the soldiers in other parts of Russia, but the officers receive about one half more, and consequently the service to them is much more popular in the Caucasus.

In the distribution of decorations the Russians are considered by some to be too lavish, lessening their consideration by their profuseness. I, however, only met but one instance in which a pretence to despise them was evinced; and their general appreciation appears from the fact that the Russians wear their decorations more frequently than we do, among whom they are more sparingly distributed.

In order not to offend the religious prejudices of the Mahomedans, when considered worthy of the Cross of St. George, or other Christian decoration, they give them their choice as to the form in which it shall be made, whether a cross or a medal, a plan which might be followed with advantage in the case of our Mahomedan troops in the East.

And now let me state in a few words the opinions I formed upon the Russians themselves. The Russians whom we met were of three distinct classes; first, the military officers and Civil Government officials; secondly, the middle-class shopkeepers, hotel keepers, and lower Government officials; and lastly, the extreme lower class, such as horsekeepers, drotzky drivers, and tarantasse post-boys. The first class I consider to be the most agreeable, hospitable, and pleasant foreigners I have ever met. The second class are servile to their superiors, or those who they think stand in estimation with their superiors; somewhat overbearing to any whose resentment they consider there is no cause to fear; avaricious in their demands upon a stranger, and not always anxious to assist him.

The third class are, I consider, on the whole the lowest class of peasantry that I have met with in Europe; they seem more coarse in their manners, more slavish in their address, and possess less intelligence than any people I have yet met with; indeed, the dull stupidity of the lower order of Russians is quite remarkable; at the same time I think it but fair to add that I believe

the Russian peasant to be the best-tempered man alive—nothing seems to put him into ill-humour, nothing to excite him; but if by chance such should occur, in a very short time he again relapses into his former docile and phlegmatic state.

In the above remarks, great allowance must be made for our want of knowledge of their language and customs. This was entirely neutralised with the first class by the medium of French and a general habit of good breeding, but it naturally acted as a bar to much intercourse with the two others. The lower-class Russians appear resolute and very persevering, slavishly obedient to their superiors, and very patriotic—qualities most valuable in war. The qualities of the upper classes, as regards bravery and perseverance, I need not dwell upon—by the British army they are universally recognised and admired; every one who served in the Crimean campaign considered it an honour to be arrayed against such heroic enemies.

As regards the peasant class of Georgia and the Tartars generally, they are infinitely quicker and more intelligent, but possess many other qualities, which render it desirable that too much dependence should not be placed upon them.

CHAPTER LI.

SPORTING IN THE CAUCASUS.

I CANNOT leave the Caucasus without alluding to the subject of sporting; but I recommend all those who do not take a very lively interest in this matter to skip over the few following pages. Upon this subject I must own that I failed to elicit such full and satisfactory information as I endeavoured to obtain.

Sporting in the Caucasus may be divided into four heads—stalking in the highest mountain ranges for the ibex; stalking in the somewhat lower ranges and in the mountain forests for the royal stag; tracking the smaller deer, or having both them and the wild boar driven; and lastly, small game shooting in all its branches.

Stalking in a wild mountain range, as in the Caucasus or in the Himalayas, is full of difficulty and labour; but the recollection of the most moderate success gives years of delight and satisfaction, quite beyond the comprehension of a sportsman who has never had the opportunity of entering into it. Driving the forest for the smaller deer or wild boar can seldom, if ever, be enjoyed at home, and therefore, from its novelty, will frequently afford great pleasure; and small game shooting, with the immense success which it is sure to meet with in these countries if well managed, will cause astonishment and delight to those

who have been accustomed at home to slave for five or six hours before they could obtain as many brace of birds.

As regards, then, the ibex, from the diligent inquiries which I made, and from the number of horns which I saw at Bodlith and its vicinity, I am inclined to believe that they exist in considerable numbers in that neighbourhood, especially in the mountain ranges about fifty or one hundred miles to the south. This country is in the heart of Daghestan, and comprises a snowy range of immense altitude, and well suited to them. Some may also be found to the south of Borjome and the south of Erivan, not far from Mount Ararat. It is not quite the same animal as the Himalayan ibex, but is somewhat smaller.

The Royal Stag or red deer I know to exist near to the west of Bodlith, which is the Lesghian district, and here Englishmen would, I have every reason to believe, be received with every attention by the natives and by the superior Russian officers. The information I received from Grosnia makes me feel certain that royal stags in large numbers are also to be found still farther towards the forests of the west, and to the south of Wedden; but they are here obtained not by the legitimate and difficult art of stalking, but by surrounding a large district of country and shooting them on their runs; and this plan, I believe, is followed in the wooded districts about Borjome and Elbrutz. I was informed that San-Clauda, near Bo-chook, about sixty versts distant from Bodlith, was looked upon as very good ground.

The smaller deer and wild boar are to be found in immense quantities in all the wooded ranges, near Grosnia, Nichailoff, and from thence towards the south of Wedden, also on the western side of the River Terek, and, in short, in all the wooded part of Circassia. Small game shooting is to be met with throughout the whole of the grounds at the base of the mountains, but the best district for this sport, I believe, would be Grosnia, and from

thence to Vladicavcas, where partridges, woodcocks, and hares are very numerous, and snipes and ducks swarm by thousands.

I have not alluded to bears, for although they certainly exist in large numbers, yet from the appearance of these immense forests, there must be the greatest uncertainty in the prosecution of this sport. Neither have I spoken of tigers, which are met with, but rarely, near Lenkoran; but to go there in the hope of shooting them would probably end in a loss of time. Pheasants, I am told, exist in great numbers on the Kuban, on which river the Don Cossacks have lately made extensive settlements from Stravopol towards Taman. I look, therefore, upon Bodlith as a good base from which a start should be made for large game shooting, and Grosnia as the place in which arrangements could best be made, either for beating the forests for deer or wild boar, or as a starting point for small game shooting.

Borjome, and the neighbourhood of his Imperial Highness's summer palace, must be looked upon as a royal preserve for the Grand Duke and his Imperial friends.

To a person entering the Caucasus by Poti there might be a temptation to linger in the woods and marshes of Imeritia, where exist such perfect cover for woodcocks and wet jeels for ducks; and, moreover, the traveller would meet with many English gentlemen employed in the railway, who would be sure to give him their best assistance, but he must always bear in mind the deadliness of the climate, and that very extensive woods, though they no doubt shelter an enormous amount of game, yet greatly increase the difficulty of obtaining them.

A sportsman bent upon stalking should not reach Bodlith later than the beginning of August; thus he would obtain two months sport in the highest mountains, whose summits are perpetually covered with snow. Circumstances, then, would dictate to him

the proper time to descend upon Grosnia for smaller sport, and by leaving the Caucasus in the late autumn, by way of Astrakhan, a lover of duck shooting, prepared to rough it on the small islands at the mouth of the River Volga, might kill such an amount of wild fowl as would probably satisfy him for the rest of his life.

With regard to fishing, I obtained even less reliable information than with regard to shooting. I could meet no one who really practised the art. If it be true that there is a description of salmon existing in the Kuron, no doubt they are to be caught, if not with flies, certainly with bait, and if they are of the size mentioned, namely, from forty to sixty pounds, they could not fail to give very great sport. This fish may be a description of the Marseer, found in the Punjaub in India, and if so, a fisherman need not despise them. I can have no doubt about the fine large trout in Lake Gotcha, because we bought and eat some, and found them very good. So far I ack as the time of Marco Polo they are described as existing there, but whether they are in the rivers Kuron and Terek, or not, I failed to make out, although I tried hard to obtain sound information, and whether they will take fly or bait was quite beyond my power of discovery.

The above information on sporting must be taken for what it is worth, and as the result of such imperfect information as I was able to elicit on this subject. The real truth is, that sporting, as we accept it, especially large game shooting, is not well understood. In that country few people will undergo the hardships and privations which Englishmen will voluntarily accept to secure what most foreigners consider so disproportionate a reward.

It is important to remark that constant vigilance must be exercised both in regard to arms and ammunition, and as little dependence as possible placed upon anyone in respect of taking

charge of either of them. Under proper management I do not believe any difficulties with the authorities would arise with regard to the possession of gunpowder, provided it were packed in proper cases, and not concealed from their knowledge. Indeed it might be desirable frequently to ask them to take charge of it.

In regard to carrying arms of defence, probably no occasion would arise for their use; but it is as well to remember that the whole people of the Caucasus are always armed, and it would be wise to adopt the habit of carrying a small revolver and a deer knife on a belt in the most convenient position round the waist.

I now return to our departure from the Caucasus by the way of the Black Sea.

CHAPTER LII.

ON THE BLACK SEA, HOMEWARDS.

EMBARKED in the small river steamer, we had an uncomfortable rolling passage to Batoum. The native gentlemen, Persians and Turks, strewed the deck in the most helpless confusion, showering invectives on the troubled Euxine. At 6 P.M. we ran into the harbour of Batoum, the first Turkish town on its eastern side. This is one of the most lovely-looking places on the face of the globe. The town, which stands on a neck of land, is composed of houses of the Eastern type, interspersed with the high minarets of mosques. The background displays the most lovely green-wooded hills, rising one behind the other, until they blend into magnificent mountains tipped with snow, the points of which are so curiously shaped as to give them a most picturesque appearance. Batoum cannot properly be said to have a harbour, as it is in a measure open to the north; but had the Turkish Government the smallest amount of energy, they might, at a comparatively small expense, make this one of the best harbours in the Black Sea.

At Batoum we had a narrow escape of a quarantine of ten days, which Turkey had established against the Caucasus and the Sea of Azof, in consequence of the cholera existing at Kertch. This quarantine was interrupted in the following singular way. About a week before our arrival, Mr. Wilkinson, the British

consul, landing from Poti, was put in quarantine in a tent on the sea-shore, under the protection of guards. During the night his carpet-bag was cut open, and a portion of his wearing-apparel purloined. The property was traced into the town of Batoum. Mr. Wilkinson at once appealed to the authorities, and, in conjunction with the Russian officials, who were also annoyed by the quarantine regulation, demanded that as infected goods had gone into the town, so the whole town, equally with himself, should now be placed in quarantine. This common-sense argument was unanswerable, and as he pressed it, the only resource which the Turkish authorities had, was to enfranchise the Caucasus for the time being; and thus, by this lucky accident of the plunder of the consul's carpet-bag, we escaped being detained for at least ten days in a wretched tent on the shores of the Black Sea, with armed guards around us, ready and willing to shoot us if we broke bounds.

Batoum is said to be as feverish and unhealthy as it is beautiful, owing to the woods, the rain, and the want of ventilation. It is the nearest sea-port town to the fort of Kars, to which, it is said, there are no roads for arabas or carts, but only a horse track, over rugged mountains. Possibly this was the reason that Omer Pasha, when he made a descent on the coast, landed at Sookumkali rather than at Batoum. Could he have reached the beleaguered city from this place, he might have been able to raise the siege, and have saved Kars and its defenders (among them General Williams and Colonel Lake) from falling into the hands of Russia. We had no time to walk on shore, nor any occasion to regret it, for Batoum, like most Turkish towns, is, I understand, more picturesque from the outside than interesting from within.

On the following morning we found ourselves anchored opposite the town of Trebizonde. The situation in which this town is

placed, and the scenery which surrounds it, are nearly as beautiful as Batoum, but without the disadvantage of being so unhealthy. The castle is built on a ridge of rocks, which bisects the city, the ditch of the fortress being formed into very beautiful

TREBIZONDE.

and luxuriant gardens. The view from the placid deep-green sea is very lovely, walls of rock backing the town. On landing, we found that the streets were kept cleaner than those of any Turkish town I have yet met with. The bazaars were very interesting and curious, and larger than is usual in cities of this size. The shops are principally kept by Armenians—a race whose only bounds to extortion are the means of gratifying it. There is a great deal of trade in Trebizonde, much of which comes through Turkey from Persia. The articles of export are silk, tobacco, wool, cotton, etc. Trebizonde is only an open roadstead, subject

in the winter to a very heavy surf in the bay. There is reported to be fine shooting in the neighbourhood, plenty of snipe and woodcock, and large game in the hills. Thousands of fat quails were exposed alive in the bazaar for sale, at about fifteen shillings the hundred. I have heard that Trebizonde is noted in the proper season for small oysters of a delicious flavour, which are sent even to Tiflis to contribute to the magnificent winter entertainments of his Imperial Highness the Grand-Duke.

By the afternoon we were again at sea, and the next morning found us at Ordu, a town of much the same character, but smaller than Trebizonde. We remained here only an hour, hoisting in such cargo as was ready.

Trade is increasing yearly in the maritime towns on the south of the Black Sea; and whereas some two years since scarcely a boat-load of exports could be found for freight in any of these towns, now three very large steamers weekly ply along this coast for freight, and readily obtain it.

We next touched at Karasund, which is said to be a more healthy town than any on the coast. It is pretty, but less wooded.

Late in the evening we reached the bottom of the deep bay in which Samsoon is situated, and anchored opposite that town. None of these towns are fortified in a manner worth mentioning, nor could they withstand an ironclad gun-boat for half an hour.

On Wednesday morning we got early coffee and went to visit Samsoon, promising ourselves a treat, in the curious Eastern bazaars, which this large town would, we thought, certainly possess. We had scarcely passed a dozen houses, when the great calamity, which this city had not very long before undergone, became apparent. The entire old part of this town, with all its bazaars, baths, and mosques, had been burnt to the ground, and so complete appeared to have been the destruction, that not one single build-

ing within the entire inner line had been left; in fact, the whole town was destroyed, with the exception of its suburbs. Steps were being taken to rebuild it, lines of shops being laid out, and already a portion of the new bazaar is built, but not yet occupied; but at the pace at which the Turk progresses, it must be some years before Samsoon thoroughly recovers from this severe visitation.

About noon we again proceeded, and being steadied by fore and aft sails, we calmly rode over the somewhat troubled sea. The vessel we were in was very slow and very dirty, the steward having no conception of the meaning of cleanliness; the cooking was filthy and greasy to a degree, quite beyond all my former experiences, and the horrid cabbage soup, floating with grease, was not made more inviting by the addition of salted cucumbers.

We had a considerable number of second-class passengers of divers classes, nations, languages, and dress; also of third and fourth we had about a hundred. They amused themselves the whole day in playing cards; and I regret to say that the prescribed prayers amongst the Mussulmans at sun-down, were no longer so strictly practised as they formerly used to be.

We passed the evening of this day at Sinope, renowned in 1854 for the destruction of the Turkish fleet by the Russians; upon which occasion, I understand, that the horizontal firing of shells from guns was for the first time carried out in war, causing such speedy havoc to the wooden walls of Turkey. It is a memorable place, especially to those whose recollections carry them back with personal interest to the days of the Crimean campaign; for Sinope, now so quiet and neglected, made a great stir in the world at that time.

Near Sinope are coal-mines, the coal of which is said to be very far superior to the best from Newcastle; they have as yet been very little worked, and are probably one of those sources of

wealth to which the Turk proposes to apply, when his last credit in the European market is receding from his view.

The whole coast on the southern side of the Black Sea varies in scenery between lovely forests, farms, and gardens. The coast of southern Italy nowhere surpasses it in beauty, and as a whole by no means equals it. Nature has been prolific in her gifts to this region, which to a certain extent have been taken advantage of by man; but what this country might become, with greater industry and capital, it is impossible to surmise.

It was not our fate to have a perfectly calm passage to Constantinople. A strong breeze now set in from the north-west, which sent a heavy swell along the coast. On Friday morning, the 29th of September, we were very slowly pursuing our way, hoping to eat our Michaelmas goose that evening in the Bosphorus. We certainly did enter the Straits that night, but it was too late to get pratique, the guns from the forts warning us to anchor, which we were compelled to do at the entrance of the Straits.

We had now, therefore, made the entire circuit of the Black Sea. We had left Constantinople on the 18th of July for Odessa, from thence we coasted, touching at every harbour, to Kertch, and after our tour by the Don, the Caspian, the Caucasus, and Mount Ararat, embarking at Poti, we visited every town on the southern coast.

On Saturday morning, the 30th, we ran down the Bosphorus and took up our position between the beautiful Seraglio Point and Galata. It being imperative for us to be in England before the 10th of October, we took immediate steps for this purpose. We had intended to return by Varna and Vienna, as the speediest way home; great, therefore, was our consternation on learning at the office that a quarantine was now established in Europe against Turkey, and that, were we to proceed by Varna, we should be

obliged to spend at least seven days in a wretched tent by the sea shore. We therefore determined, if possible, to catch the Trieste boat, which was named to sail that very morning at ten o'clock. It was now nine, and during this hour our letters had to be sought in Galata, money obtained for our passage, etc. Thus, for once, we blessed the unpunctuality invariable in Turkey. By diligence we completed all, and were on board the "Diana" by 11 A.M. As we rowed up to the vessel, the custom-house officer, ever on the alert, touched the gangway of the ship at the same moment as ourselves, and required us to return to the custom-house, with all our baggage. We perfectly understood the whole affair, and when the boatman whispered "backsheesh," we thought it more politic to comply than fight the question; his ready slipper was in the bow of his boat, and on our slipping into it a piece of silver, which he pretended not to see, he at once vanished.

CHAPTER LIII.

RETURN TO ENGLAND.

It was with extreme regret that I felt compelled to stay so short a time in Constantinople, as I had desired to express my thanks to all those who had done us so much service—in forwarding letters concerning us to the authorities in the Caucasus, and in many other ways showing us attention and kindness. In the sequel, however, it was most fortunate for us that we left; for had we gone up into Pera, and taken up our lodgings in that part of the city, as we had at first intended, most probably we should have been within the cordon that was instituted against cholera, which was raging there, and should have been detained for a month.

On Saturday, the 30th of September, we lifted anchor and glided from amongst the shipping in the Bosphorus, and rounded the beautiful Seraglio Point, probably seeing it for the last time. The memories of bygone days flashed upon my mind, when thirty-four years before, this queen of cities first opened on my view. I then approached it at sunrise in my little yacht, which I had sailed more than a thousand miles. Then everything was Oriental —the people, their buildings, their manners, their ideas, all were purely Turkish—and we Franks were looked upon as a set of unclean dogs, whose presence was sanctioned only because we were useful. The bazaars then were truly Eastern, and in my opinion

the city much pleasanter. The Turks are possessed of many noble qualities, and the Greek and Jewish element was not then so much in the ascendant.

The Austrian Lloyd passenger-boats are most comfortable, and although the passage-money to Trieste, which was nearly fourteen pounds for five days, was rather high, yet the food and attendance and comfort we met with, were so good as not to be dearly purchased.

We met on board a very pleasant set of passengers, most of them intelligent merchants from Constantinople. Among them was an American gentleman of the name of Hamlyn, the Principal of Roberts's College, near to Roumali Hissa, on the Bosphorus, who had a fund of anecdotes about Turkey and the Turks, which resembled those of the "Arabian Nights," recalling in his stories the old days of the Janissaries, of Sultan Mustapha and the murdered Selim, and many strange and interesting histories of bygone Turkish days. He was on his way to America, to endeavour to procure the means of putting a finishing stroke to the great work at which for years he had been labouring. After incessant trouble with the Sublime Porte, and many years of wearying importunities, he had at length obtained a Firman to build the college. Again, after some years of anxiety and worry, it was only under the moral pressure of Admiral Farragut and his big guns that he was able to proceed and carry the Firman into execution, which resulted in a noble building, on a fine site, above the Bosphorus, which was finished at a cost of about twenty thousand pounds. It is a wonderful establishment for the East, is now in good working order, and already counts one hundred and forty boarders, consisting of some Turks, many Bulgarians, Greeks, etc., etc.

Mr. Hamlyn was now proceeding to America in the hope of obtaining a sum equal to that which he had already expended, for

the purpose of founding a library and two or three professorships, and although the sum is so large, yet he entertained very strong hopes of success, for, as he stated, America has no lack of generous, far-seeing, and sympathising men, and, indeed, he might have added of very wealthy ones also.

The last voyage of the Diana had been to Alexandria. The account given by one of the lieutenants of the vessel, who had been many times through the Suez Canal, was anything but satisfactory. He said that although more than twenty-two feet of water may now exist, it is only in the exact centre of the canal, so that two ships of that draught cannot pass each other, excepting at certain points especially provided for their doing so, which of itself causes great delays, and that the wash of the wave from the motion of the ships was certainly doing great injury to the banks, while the accumulation caused by the blowing of the sand of the desert was causing, continually, an enormous outlay to keep it clear. The cost of this great work was, I understand, far larger than is generally supposed, and cannot be put at less than twenty millions sterling.

We passed through the Dardanelles during the night, and the next morning found us in the Archipelago, almost at the spot where, in 1839, I had seen the Turkish fleet desert from the service of the Sultan Mahmood, and give themselves up to Mehemet Ali of Egypt. It was on that occasion my fortune to sail through the Turkish fleet, in my little cutter the Ariel on my way to Smyrna, and to be the first to communicate the intelligence to our consul there.

By four in the afternoon of the 1st October, we reached the island of Syra. It being Sunday, everything on land appeared to be dressed out in holiday costume, but as we were in quarantine, we were not permitted to land.

The town of Syra appeared very much increased, since last

I visited it about sixteen years since; indeed, to have almost doubled its size. I was told that every Greek merchant, in whatever part of the world he may reside and carry on his business, yet feels it incumbent upon him to possess a house in Syra; thus this island, which in point of fact is nothing more than a barren rock, possesses a city of great wealth and importance.

By the following morning, we were passing Cape Matapan, and towards the afternoon we coasted by the harbour of Navarino —a fatal name for Turkey,—where, in consequence of her obstinacy, she first commenced her retrograde career.

QUARANTINE.

We anchored next morning at Corfu—our yellow flag flying to denote that we were forbidden communication. The town ap-

peared in no way changed since I was stationed there thirty years previously; I recognised every house. The fortifications, which we had assisted to build with so much toil and so great an outlay, lay in ruins—destroyed at the command of diplomacy, when, at the fiat of Lord Palmerston, we surrendered the island to the Greeks.

There appeared to be very little shipping of a commercial haracter in the harbour. There was an ironclad Greek Government vessel, which I was told was first purchased by a company of filibusters to assist the rebellion in Crete against Turkey, but on the failing of that attempt, it was bought by the Greek Government to prevent its being turned to more dangerous uses. There were two or three other Greek men-of-war steamers, and a yacht, which was said to be owned by a Mulatto gentleman.

The King and Queen of Greece, and many other members of the royal family, were residing at the summer palace, where formerly we had enjoyed many a pleasant pic-nic.

We despatched some unfortunate students, who came as passengers upon a visit to their relations in Corfu, to the small lazaretto island in the bay, where the quarantine regulation of the island doomed them to pass eleven days of their short vacation from college.

On Thursday, the 5th of October, we at last arrived at Trieste. We lost no time in starting off for London, and passing rapidly, far too rapidly, by Venice, Verona, Milan and Turin, and being the last party that ever crossed the Alps by the Mont Cenis Mountain Railroad, we travelled viâ Dijon to Paris. Nor had we much time to examine the destruction caused by the Communists, for in twelve hours more we found ourselves again in London, exactly four months from the time of our departure.

In the foregoing pages I have attempted to describe our journey exactly as it occurred, and I trust this account of it may

prove useful to any of my countrymen who may follow in our steps, as I feel that had we, before we started, possessed some of the information which I have given above, we should have been saved much trouble and anxiety.

My record of our journey, and my son's sketches, afforded us a great deal of amusement and occupation; and we have the pleasure of feeling that we did not spend in idleness the college vacation of the summer of 1871.

APPENDIX.

—•—

NAMES OF PLACES VISITED AND DATES.

June 9. Left London.
10. Aix-la-Chapelle.
11. Cologne.
12. Munich.
13. Salzburg.
14—18. Vienna.
19—21. Pesth.
22. Temesvar.
23. Basiasch.
24—25. Orsova.
26. Widdin.
27—29. Bucharest.
30. Rustchuk.

July 1. Schumla.
2—4. Varna.
5. Black Sea.
6—13. Therapia.
14—17. Pera.
18. Bosphorus.
19. Black Sea.
20. Odessa.
21. Nicolaef.
22—24. Odessa.
25—26. Yalta.
27. Baidar.
28—29. Sebastopol.
30. Batcheserai.
31. Sebastopol.

Aug. 1. Sebastopol.
2. Kertch.
3. Taganrog.
4. Rostow.
5—8. The Don
9. Tsaritzin.
10—15. Astrakhan.
16—17. The Caspian.
18. Petrolvks.
19. Temir-han-Tsura.
20. Jem Gootai.
21. Girgibil.
22—23. Guinib.
24—25. Honsak.
26. Choke.
27. Bodlith.
28. Aisilam.
29. Wedden.
30. Grosnia.
31. Vladicavcas.

Sept. 1. Lars.
2. Kasbec.
3. Mehketi.
4—6. Tiflis.
7. Kajora.
8. Tiflis.
9. Near Kuron.
10. Fontanka.

Sept. 11. Erivan.
12. Etchmiazin.
13. Sardarabat.
14—15. Alexandropol.
16. Troidskey.
17. Kirkliss.
18. Alhaltshik.
19—20. Borjome.
21. Tilliwill.
22—23. Poti.
24. Batoum.
25. Trebizonde.
26. Karasunde.
Sept. 27. Samsunde.
28. Jamboli.
29. Sinope.
30. Constantinople.
Oct. 1. Dardanelles.
2. Cape Matapan.
3. Corfu.
4. Lissa.
5—6. Trieste.
7. Venice.
8. Turin.
9. Paris.
10. London.

POST ROADS.

1.—From Tiflis to Erivan.

Tiflis—	Versts.
1. Sagaulou	12
2. Tagloudja	12
3. Algitka	22¼
4. Salaglinskaia	20½
5. Zor Arch	14
6. Novo Akstifa	12
7. Ousantalon	17
8. Ustiboulakskaia	18
9. Tchourousani	19
10. Deligan	19¼
11. Tchouboukou	27½
12. Elinofska	12¾
13. Akti	15½
14. Fontanka	12
15. Eiliarskaia	17½
16. Erivan	15
Total	266¼

2.—From Tiflis to Kutais.

Tiflis—	Versts.
1. Allchekti	20
2. Nitch-bis	13 village.
3. Akal-kalaki	18¼ „
4. Gori	21½ town.
5. Gagarep	25 station.
* 6. Suram	22 station.
7. Ponksk	13½ „
8. Malit	15½ „
9. Belogor	17 „
10. Tilliwill	21½ railroad.
11. Simonetti	19
12. Kutais	18
Suram—	
1. Samokeraia	14½
‡ 2. Borjome	13
3. Starmakoff	12
4. Athouri	13
5. Alhaltshick	20 fort.
6. Abastuman	23½
	320½

3.—From Tiflis to Bakou on the Caspian.

Tiflis—	Versts.
1. Saganlou	12
2. Tagloujir	12
3. Algitka	22¼
4. Salaglinskaia	20½
5. Zor-Arch	14
§ 6. Novo Akstifa	12
7. Gasanskaia	12
8. Taouskaia	16½

* From Suram the road branches to Borjome.

† From Kiliwill the railroad is now open to Poti—distance about 100 versts.

‡ Summer residence of the Grand Duke, and mineral waters.

§ Here branches the road to Erivan.

		Versts.
9.	Dzekamskaia	19
10.	Tchamkori	21½
11.	Kara-Erskaia	9½
12.	Eliazawetpol	17
13.	Kurakskaia	19
14.	Kurgouloultchai	19
15.	Mingitsavouri	20
16.	Tchemaklinskaia	13¼
17.	Arabskaia	15
18.	Pousiants-aiskaia	16½
19.	Goktchaiskaia	17¼
20.	Karamarianskaia	21½
21.	Kululinskaia	13
22.	Ach-sou	21
23.	Tchara-dilskaia	17
*24.	Schemaka	18½
25.	Adji-daraia	12¼
26.	Muraja	15½
27.	Nagi Kapi	13¾
28.	Dgegi	17½
29.	Naglemerinkskaia	12½
30.	Arbaa	11
31.	Saraiskaia	17½
32.	Bakou	17½
		516½

4.—From Petrolvks to Vladicavcas.

	Petrolvks—	Versts.	
1.	Koun-ter Kali	22	small town
2.	Temirgoi	22	village
3.	Tchis-zurt	17¼	„
4.	Kasafjurt	28¼	„
5.	Tach Ketchu	17¾	„
6.	Tchelko-zawodsk	13	village
7.	Tchedrin	20½	„
8.	Tcherwlena	21	„

* Here branches the road to Lenkoran.

		Versts.	
9.	Nicolaef	9	village
10.	Petropawlow	21	„
*11.	Grosnia	14	town
12.	Alkan-zurt	12	village
13.	Samarka	20	„
14.	Sleptskowka	23	„
15.	Naz-ran	19¼	Tartar village
16.	Vladicavcas	25¾	town
		305¾	

5.—From Vladicavcas to Tiflis.

Vladicavcas—		Versts.	
1.	Balta	12½	
2.	Lars	16	station
3.	Kasbec	18½	
4.	Kobi	18½	
5.	Goudavouri	14½	telegraph
6.	Mleti	18	
7.	Para-navouri	18½	
8.	Anan-ouri	21	
9.	Doushet	16¾	town
10.	Tchilkan	17¾	
11.	Mchketi	14¾	village
12.	Tiflis	20	city
		206¾	

6.—From Vladicavcas to Rostow and to Petigorse.

Vladicavcas—		Versts.
1.	Kautichefskaia	20
2.	Srédui Alchavulskaia	20
3.	Mahomet Simslofskaia	20
4.	Mosdok	24
5.	Pawlodolskaia	14

* At Grosnia joins the mountain road by Temir-han-Tsura and Guinib.

	Versts.
6. Ekaterino-gradskaia	18¼
7. Prokladnaia	20½
8. Soldatskaia	14¾
9. Haro Pawlofskaia	19¾
*10. Giorgewsk	26¾
Giorgewsk	
Lisogorsa	18½
Petigorse	17
11. Alexandria	12¼
12. Souko Padruskaia	18
13. Sablinskaia	16¼
14. Alexandrouskaia	26¾
15. Kalinofskaia	20¼
16. Sergeefskaia	18½
17. Bazowaia Balka	21¼
18. Staro Marefskaia	21¼
19. Stravopol	21
20. Rouskaia	13¼
21. Moskofskaia	15
22. Douskaia	20¼
23. Besofsasnaia	21
24. Predgadnaia	23
25. Medwejinskaia	24
26. Letnitskaia	22¾
27. Pechano Kopskaia	25
28. Spedno Egolinskaia	27¼
29. Grisnioukwskaia	16
30. Merkoulofkaia	21
31. Novo-Protopopskaia	22
32. Kagolnitskaia	18
33. Makrabotstaiskaia	18
34. Machinskaia	17
35. Aksaiskaia	10
36. Gorbikofskaia	7
37. Rostow	17½
	711½

* From Giorgewsk a road branches to the mineral springs of Petigorse.

7.—From Erivan to Nachit-chevan.

Erivan—	Versts.
1. Agamzali	13
2. Kama-liy	15
3. Dawa-loa	18¼
4. Sa-da-rau	18¾
5. Batch-Narachen	22¼
6. Ku-wrak	22¾
7. Beyuk Duzii	14¾
8. Nachit-chevan	18
	143¼

8.—From Erivan to Alexandropol, *vid* the Deligan Pos Route.

Erivan—	Versts.
1. Eiliarskaia	15
2. Fontanka	17½
3. Akti	12
4. Elenofska	15½
5. Tchoubouklou	12¾
*6. Deligan	27½
7. Gamscthemain	17½
8. Karaklis	18¼
9. Amanli	20½
10. Arh-Boulov	21¾
11. Alexandropol	19¾
Total	198

9.—From Erivan to Borjome, by the Turkish Frontier.

Erivan—	Versts.
1. Etchmiazin	17
2. Sardarabat	25

* Here branches the road to Tiflis.

		Versts.
3.	Talim	32
4.	Mastera	23
5.	Sunagal	10
6.	Alexandropol	30
7.	Shistepper	20
8.	Troidskey	25
9.	Alhalkalaky	45
10.	Nakalaky	18
11.	Kirkfiss	7
12.	Edumulah	16
13.	Alhalshik	24
14.	Athouri	20
15.	Starnakof	13
16.	Borjome	12
	Total	337

10.—From Arbat to Kouba, Derbent, Temir-han-tsura, and Petrolvks.

Arbat—		Versts.
1.	Soumgait	11
2.	Kiliazi	28
3.	Kidizze	22¼
4.	Kizil Bouroun	14¼
5.	Diwitchi	17½
6.	Welweli	21⅓
7.	Kouba	21⅓
8.	Koudatskaia	21¼
9.	Talaminskaia	21¼
10.	Derbeno Koularskaia	12
11.	Arab-Archkaia	11⅓
12.	Derbent	14⅓
13.	Mamed Kalsa	18¼
14.	Dgemi Kent	15⅓
15.	Kai Kent	16
16.	Deslagar	24

		Versts.
17.	Goubdenskaia	15
18.	Karabdachent	16
19.	Paraoul	16¾
20.	Temir-han-tsura	22
*21.	Koumterkale	25
22.	Petrolvks	22
	Total	407

11.—THE MOUNTAIN ROAD FROM TEMIR-HAN-TSURA TO GUINIB AND GROSNIA.

Temir-han-tsura—		Versts.
1.	Musli Mauld	3
	Bon-ghu	9
2.	Jem Gootai	7
	Ver-knee	2
	Duranghey	6
	Auchkley	9
	Aimakee	7
3.	Girgibil	9
	Giorgioskimosk	9
4.	Guinib	13
5.	Karadat	28
6.	Honsak	29
7.	Choke	42
8.	Bodlith	24
9.	Aisilam or Lake Forelli	32
10.	Wedden	30
11.	Assuri	22
†12.	Grosnia	31
	Total	312

* From Koumterkale branches the road to Vladicaveas.

† At Grosnia the regular post road from Petrolvks on the Caspian Sea to Vladicaveas is joined.

12.—From Semacha to Lenkoran.

Semacha—	Versts.
1. Tchailinskaia	19¼
2. Koubalinskaia	17¼
3. Pachalinskaia	13
4. Adgi Kaboulskaia	25
5. Karasinskaia	24½
6. Saliani	20½
7. Dgesran Bergi	33
8. Prisiblinskaia	35
9. Kizil Agatch	17
10. Koumbasinskaia	16
11. Lenkoran	19
Total	239½

Total Distances Travelled in the Caucasus.

		Versts.
From Petrolvks	to Grosnia	347
From Grosnia	to Vladicaveas	100
From Vladicaveas	to Tiflis	207
From Tiflis	to Erivan	257
From Erivan	to Alhalkalaky	220
From Alhalkalaky	to Borjome	110
From Borjome	to Tilliwill	96
From Tilliwill	to Poti (per rail)	100
	Total	1,437

Steamers leave Astrakhan every Tuesday during the summer months, and return on the Thursday or Friday fortnight, and they touch at the following places as nearly as possible on the days specified :—

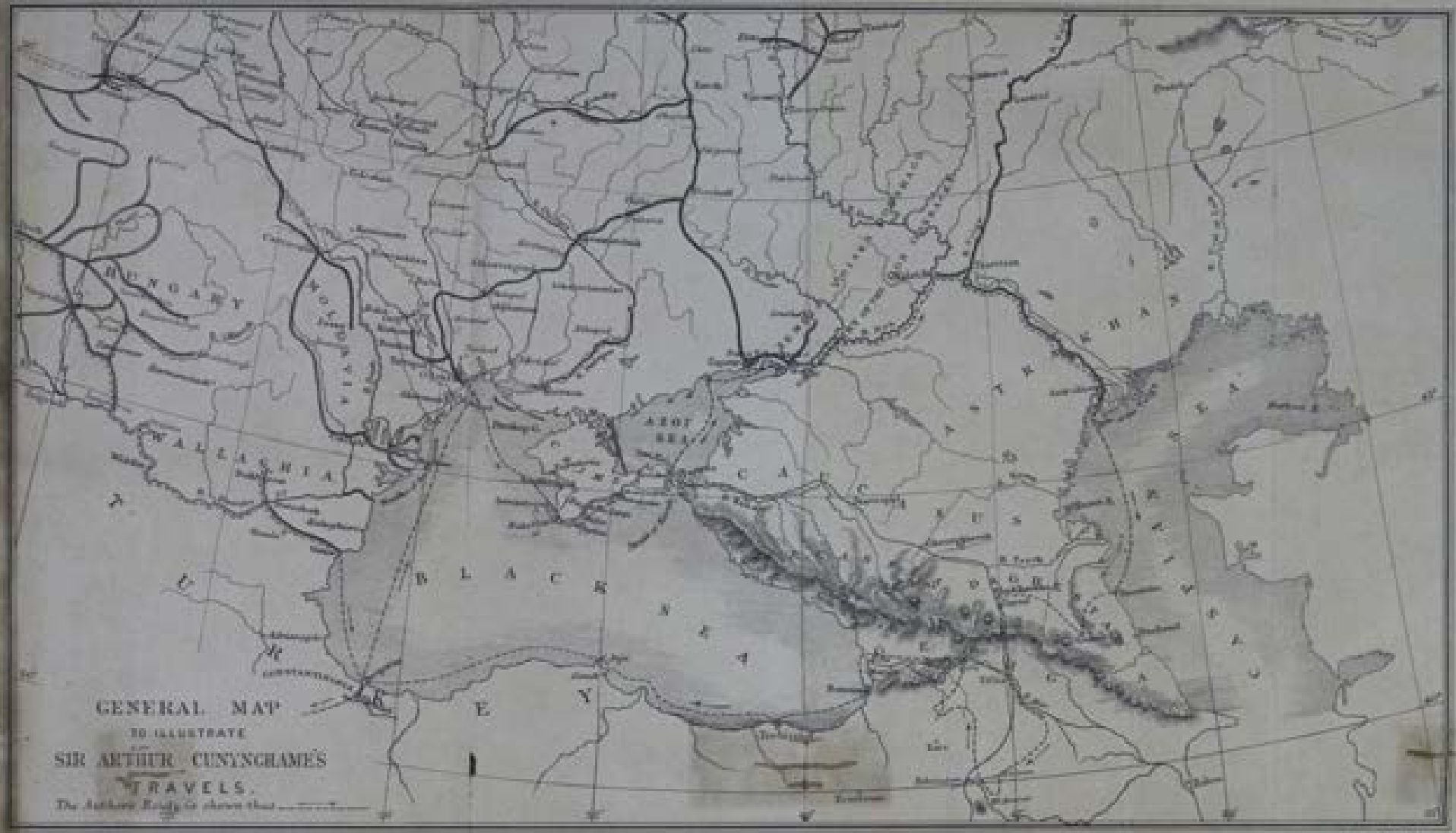
Astrakhan . . .	Tuesday.
Petrolvks	Thursday.
Derbent	Friday.
Bakou	Saturday, and remain Sunday.
Lenkoran	Monday
Angeli (in Persia) . .	Tuesday.
Astrabad (*id est*, Assmadah)	Wednesday.

There is also a steamer once a week from Bakou to Krasmouvolko, on the coast immediately opposite, which performs the passage in about twenty-four hours.

It is stated that the railroad is now (October, 1872) completed and opened from Tiflis to Poti.

THE END.

BRADBURY, EVANS, AND CO., PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.


HUNGARY
WALLACHIA
BLACK SEA
ARCHIPELAGO
GENERAL MAP
TO ILLUSTRATE
SIR ARTHUR CUNYNGHAME'S
TRAVELS.
The Authors Route is shewn thus

00058764

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 05 October, 2018